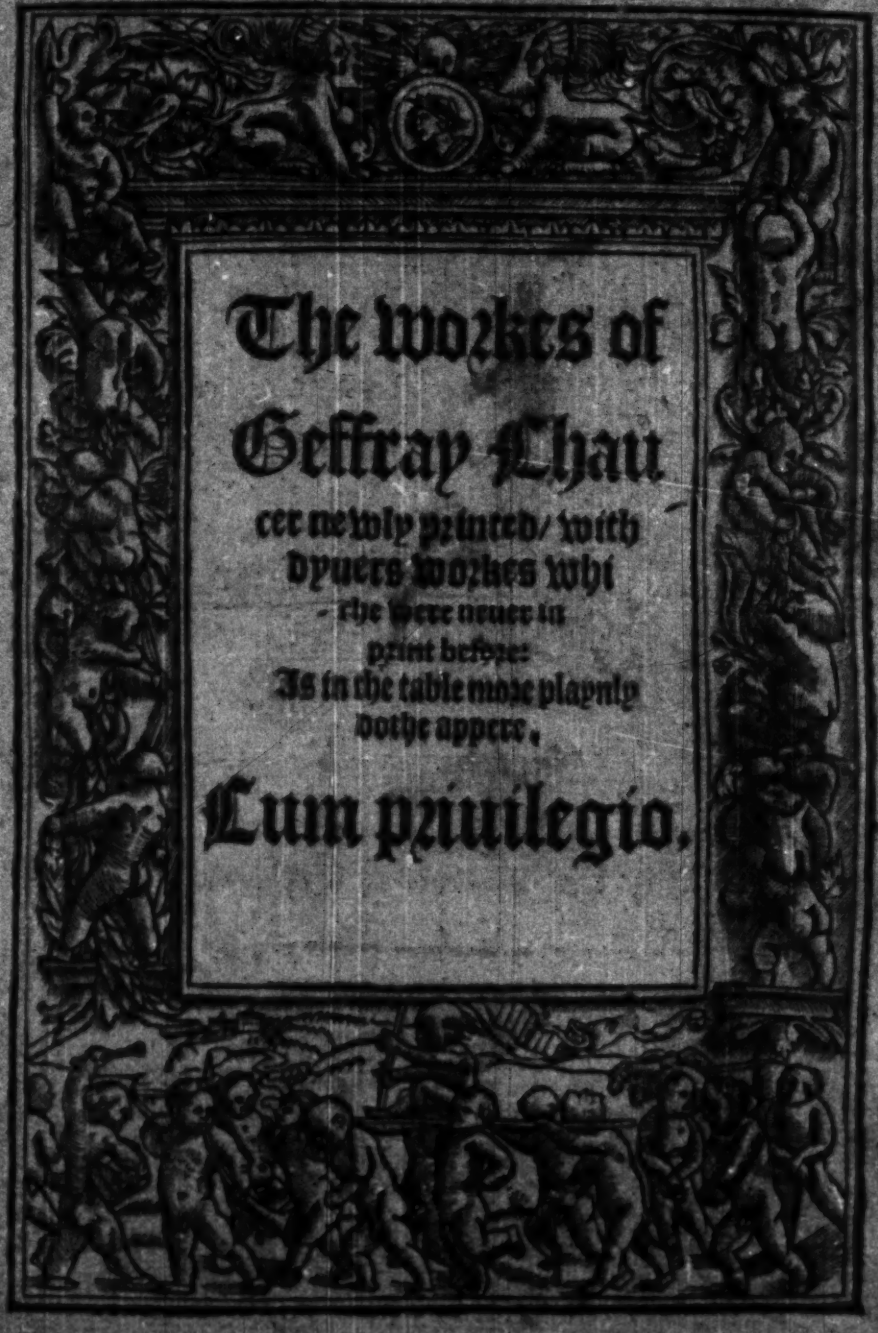


The wozkes of Geffray Chau cer newly prynted/ with dyuers wozkes whi che were neuer in prynt before: As in the table moze playnly dothe appere.

Cum priuilegio.

¶ To the kynges hyghnesse/ my moſt gratious ſouerayne lorde Kyng the eight/ by the grace of god kyng of Englande and of Fraunce/ defendor of the fayth/ and lorde of Irelande. &c.

Amonges all other excellencyes/ moſt gratious ſouerayne lorde/ wherin yͤ almyghtye god hath endowed mankynde/ aboue yͤ reſydue of earthly creatures/ as an outwarde declaracion of reaſon or reſonablenesse/ wherin conſyſteth the ſymylitude of man vnto angelis/ and the differẽce betwene the ſame & bruite beſtes/ I verayly ſuppoſe/ that ſpeche or langage is nat to be reputed amonges the ſmalleſt or inferiours. For therby is expreſſed the conceite of one to another in open and playne ſentence/ whiche in the reſydue of lyuely creatures/ lacketh and is nat ſhewed amonges them/ but by certayn couert and derke ſignes/ and that in ſewe thynges hauyng courſe and operation onely of nature. This ſpeche or langage/ after the confuſyon of tonges/ ſente by goddes puniſhment for pryde and arrogance of people/ hath ben by a certayne induyncte & dyſpoſycion naturall dyuyded and inuented in ſundry partes of the worlde/ as felowſhippes or companyenges of folkes one with a nother chaunced/ moche to the outwarde expreſſyng of the thyng in worde or ſoũde/ accordyng to that whereof it had meanyng or ſygnification. But in proceſſe of tyme/ by dylygence or polycy of people/ after dyuerſe fourmes/ figures/ and impreſſyons in metall/ bookes of trees/ and other mater̃s vſed for memorie and knowlege of thynges then preſent or paſſed/ dyuers letters or caracters were fyrſt amonges the Ebrues deuyſed and fourmed/ wyth ſuche hanſyngnes and conuynyences of one to another by a marueylous ſubtylte and craft/ as ſomtyme

ſeyled hym/ and is equiualent to the ſame languages. Now as the conceite of mannes mynde/ touched or ſygnyfyed was vſed to be herkened by mouthe onely/ came to ſuche poynt/ that it was as fruitfully and profytably expreſſed or wrytynge. Herupon me ſemed a great occaſion & cauſe vnto them that ſholde write/ to compone and deuyſe ſuche ruborneſſe and barbarite of ſpeche/ and to forme it to an eloquent and eligeant ſtyle/ wherevnto many and many greate poetes and orateurs haue highly employed their ſtudies and corages/ leauyng therby notable renoume of them ſelues/ and exaumple perpetuell to their poſterite. Amonges other/ the Grekes in all kyndes of ſciences/ ſemed ſo to pryuayle and ſo to ornate their tonge/ as yet by other of right noble langages can nat be perfitely pyntated or followed. The Latyns by exaumple of the grekes/ haue gotten or wonne to the no ſmall gloire/ in the fourmynge/ order/ and dyſtrynge of that tonge. But of the whyche two/ if it be well ſercched/ that is to ſaye Greke and Latyn (though by corruptyon of ſpeche it ſholde ſeme moche otherwyſe) haue ben derpued the reſydue of the langages that be wryten wyth the letters or caracters of either of them bothe: But of all ſpeches/ thoſe whyche moſt approche to the latynite/ be the Italyan and Spayngſhe tonges/ of whom the one by corruption of the Gothes and Longobardes had hers beginnynge/ as latyn ſpoken by ſtraungers of a barbare vnderſtandyng/ The other beyng alſo latyn was by Vandales/ Gothes/ Moores/ Sarracenes/ and other ſo many tymes blemyſſhed/ as maruayle is to ſe now vnto what pfection theſe two founded out of the latyn and barbare ſpeches be reduced. Next vnto them/ in ſymylytude to the latyn is the Frenche tonge/ whyche by dylygence of people of the ſame/ is in fewe yeres paſſed to amended (as well in pronunciation as in wrytynge) that an Engliſhman by a ſmall tyme exercyſed in that tonge hath nat lacked grande to vnderſtande or gyue ſy[illegible]

(whiche some shall scarcely beleue) the Germayns haue so fourmed the order of their langage/ that in the same/ is bothe as moche plente and as nere concordaunce to the phrase of the latyn/ as the frenche tong hath. And veraply/ lyke as all these and the rest haue ben thus vigilant & studyous to meliorate or amende their langages: so hath there nat lacked amóges vs Englisshmen/ whiche haue right well and notably endeuoyred and employed them selues/ to the beautifyeng and bettryng of thenglysh tonge. ¶ Amonges whom moost excellent prynce/ my moost redoubted and gracious soueraygne lorde/ I pour most humble vassall/ subiecte and seruaunt Wyllyam Thynne/ chefe clerke of pour kechyn/ moued by a certayne inclynacion & zele/ whiche I haue to here of any thyng soundyng to the laude and honour of this pour noble realme/ haue taken great delectacyon/ as the tymes and layseres might suffre/ to rede and here the bokes of that noble & famous clerke Geffray Chaucer/ in whose workes is so manyfest comprohacion of his excellent lernyng/ all kyndes of doctrynes and sciences/ suche fruitefulnesse in wordes/ wel accordynge to the mater and purpose/ so swete and pleasaunt sentences/ suche perfeccyon in metre/ the cópolycion so adapted/ suche freshnesse of inuencion/ compendyousnesse in narration/ suche sensyble and open style/ lackyng neither matere ne mediocrite conuenable i disposycion/ and suche sharpnesse or quycknesse in cóclusyon/ that it is moche to be marueyled/ howe in his tyme/ whã doutlesse all good letters were layde a slepe throughout ỹ worlde/ as the thynge whiche either by the disposycion & influẽce of the bodies aboue/ or by other or dynaunce of god/ semed lyke and was in daunger to haue vtterly perysshed/ suche an excellent poete in our tonge/ shulde as it were (nature repugnyng) spryng and aryse. For though it had ben in Demosthenes or Homerus tymes/ whan all lernyng and excellency of sciences florished amonges the Grekes/ or in the seson ỹ Cicero pryme of eloquẽce amonges latyns lyued/ yet had it ben a thyng right rare & straũge and worthy perpetuall laude/ ỹ any clerke by lernyng or wytte coulde than haue framed a tonge before so rude and imperfite/ to suche a swete ornature and cópolycion/ lykwyse if he had lyued in these dayes/ beig good letters so restored & remyued as they be/ if he were nat empeched by the enuy of suche as may tollerate nothyng/ whiche to vnderstõde their capacite doth nat extẽde/ to haue brought it vnto a full and hyghe perfection. Wherfore gracious souerayne lorde/ takynge suche delyte and pleasure in the workes of this noble clerke (as is afore mencioned) I haue of a longe season moch vsed to rede and delyte the same: and as bokes of dyuers impryntes came vnto my handes/ I easely and without grete study/ might and haue deprehended in the many errours/ falsyties/ and deprauacions/ whiche euydently appered by the contrarietees and alteracions founde by collacion of the one with the other/ wherby I was moued and stryred to make dylygent serche/ where I might hynde or recouer any trewe copies or exemplaries of the sayd bookes/ whervnto in processe of tyme/ nat without coste and payne I attayned/ and nat onely vnto such as seme to be very trewe copies of those workes of Geffray Chaucer/ whiche before had ben put in prynte/ but also to dyuers other neuer tyll nowe imprynted/ but remaynyng almost vnknowen and in obliuion/ wherupon lamentyng with my selfe/ the negligence of the people/ that haue ben in this realme/ who doutlesse were very rempsse in the settyng forthe or auancement either of the hystories therof/ to the great hynderaunce of the renoumme of such noble princes and valyant conquerours & capitayns as haue ben in the same/ or also of the workes or memory of ỹ famous and excellent clerkes in all kyndes of sciences that haue florysshed therin/ Of whiche bothe sortes it hath pleased god as highly to nobilytate this ple as any other regyon of christendome: I thought it in maner ap

pertenant

pertenant vnto my dewtie/ and that of very honesty and loue to my cõtrey I ought no lesse to do/ thā to put my helpyng hande to the restauracion and bringynge agayne to lyght of the said workes/ after the trewe copies and exẽplaries aforesaid. And desirynge w^t my selfe/ who of all other were most worthy/ to whom a thyng so excellent and notable shulde be dedicate/ whiche to my conceite semeth for the abbreuiacion/ noueltie/ and straungnelle that it myght be reputed to be of in the tyme of the authour/ in comparison/ as a pure and fyne tryed precious or poiyced ie well out of a rude or vnpolyshed masse or mater/ none couldē to my thynkyng occure/ that syns/ or in the tyme of Chaucer/ was or is sufficient/ but oncly youre mageste royall/ whiche by discrecyon and iugement/ as moost absolute in wysedome and all kyndes of doctryne/ couldē of his innate clemence & goodnelle/ wolde adde or gyue any authorite herunto.

For this cause moost excellent and I all bertuous moost puissant prince/ I as humbly prostrate before youre kyngly estate/ lowly supply and beseche the same/ that it wol vouchsafe to take in good parte my poore studye and defyrous mynde/ in reducynge vnto lyght this so precious and necessary an ornament of the tonge of this youre realme/ ouer pytous to haue ben in any poynt lost/ falsifyed/ or neglected: So that vnder the shylde of youre moost royall protectyon and defence it may go forthe in publyke/ apparaple ouer theyr that wolde blemysshe/ deface/ and in many thynges clerely abolysshe the laude/ renoume/ and glorie herto fore compared/ and meritoriously adquired by dyuers princes/ and other of this said moost noble ple/ wherunto nat onely straungers vnder pretexte of highe lernyng & knowlege of their malycious and peruerse myndes/ but also some of youre owne subiectes/ blynded in fely & ignorance/ do with great studye contende. Moost gracious/ victorious/ and of god moost elect and worthy prince/ my moost dradde soueraygne lorde/ in whom of very nature/ heroyt and fulcreacion/ is renewed the glorious tytell of Defensor of the christen faythe/ whiche by youre noble progenytour/ the great Costantyne/ sometyme kyng of this realme/ & emperour of Rome was nexte god and his apostels/ chefely mayntayned/ corroborate/ and defended/ almighty Jesu sende to yor highnesse the contynuall and euerlastynge habundaunce of his infynite grace. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the preface.

¶ A table of all the names of the workes cõtayned in this volume.

¶ The preface.

The Canterbury tales ij.
The Romant of the Rose ij.
Troylus and Cresyde iij.
The testament of Cresyde iij.
The legende of good women/ w^t a balade v.
Boetius de Consolatione philosophie vi.
The dreame of Chaucer/ with a balade vij.
The assemble of Foules viij.
The flour of Curtesy/ with a balade ix.
Hewe pyte is dede & beryed in a gryse fert x.
La bele dame sanns mercy xj.
Anneyda and false Arcyte xij.
The assemble of Ladyes xiij.
The conclusyon of the Astrolabye xiij.
The complaynt of the blacke knyght xv.
A prayse of women xvij.
The house of Fame xvij.
The testament of Loue xviij.
The lamentacion of Mary Magdaleyn xix.
The Remedy of loue xx.
The cõplaynt of Mars and Venus xxi.
The complaynt of Mars alone xxij.
The complaynt of Venus alone xxiij.
The letter of Cupyde xxiij.
A balade of our Lady xxiij.
A balade to kyng Henry the fourth xxiij.
Of the Cuckowe & the Nightyngale xxiij.
Scogan vnto the ponge lordes and gentylmen of the kynges house xxiij.
A balade of good counsaile by Chaucer xxiij.
Diuers other goodly balades. &c. xxiij.

¶ Thus endeth the fyrst table and here followeth the seconde.

¶ In this table ye maye fynde any thynge that ye woll haue in this volume by the Folio/ as foloweth.

The ploges of the Cauterbury tales.

The knyghtes tale fo. Primo.
The Millers tale fo. viii.
The Reues tale fo. xviii.
The Cokes tale fo. xxii.
The Wan of lawes tale fo. xxii.
The Squyers tale fo. xxiii.
The Marchaunttes tale fo. xxviii.
The wyfe of Bathes prologue fo. xl.
The wyfe of Bathes tale fo. xlvii.
The Freres tale fo. xlviii.
The Sompners tale fo. xlix.
The clerke of Oxenfordes tale fo. lii.
The Frankeleyns tale fo. lv.
The seconde Nunnes tale fo. lvi.
The ploge of the Chanõs yoman fo. lviii.
The tale of the Chanons yoman fo. lxv.
The doctor of Phisykes tale fo. lxviii.
The Pardoners prologue fo. lxxvi.
The Pardoners tale fo. lxxvii.
The Shypmans tale fo. lxxx.
The Priores prologue fo. lxxxvii.
The Priores tale fo. eodem.
The ryme of sir Topas fo. lxxxix.
The tale of Chaucer fo. lxxxix.
The Monkes prologue fo. lxxxxvi.
The Monkes tale fo. eodem.
The tale of the Nunnes preest fo. L. i.
The Wanneples tale fo. L. v.
The Persons prologue fo. L. vii.
The Persons tale fo. eodem.

¶ Explicit Cauterbury tales.

The Romaunt of the Rose fo. L. xxviii.

¶ Troylus and Creseyde is deuyded in to fyue bookes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth fo. C. lxx.
The seconde boke begynneth fo. C. lxxvi.
The therde boke begynneth fo. C. lxxxv.
The fourth boke begineth fo. C. lxxxxvii.
The fyfth boke begynneth fo. CC. vi.

¶ Explicit Troylus and Creseyde.

The lamente of Creseyde fo. CC. xix.

¶ The legende of Good women hath all these folowyng. First.

¶ The prologue. fo. CC. xx.
¶ The legende of Cleopatras fo. cc. xxii.
The leg. of Thysbe of Babylone fo. eodem.
The legende of quene Dydo fo. cc. xxiii.
The leg. of Hypsipile & Medea fo. cc. xxvii.
The leg. of Lucrece of Rome fo. cc. xxviii.
The legende of Ariadne fo. cc. xxx.
The legende of Philomene fo. cc. xxxi.
The legende of Phillys fo. cc. xxxii.
The legende of Hypermestra fo. cc. xxxiii.

¶ Explicit the legende of Good women.

¶ Boecius de Consolatione is deuyded in to fyue bokes.

¶ The fyrst boke begineth fo. cc. xxxvi.
The seconde boke begynneth fo. cc. xli.
The thirde boke begynneth fo. cc. xlviii.
The fourth boke begynneth fo. cc. lvii.
The fyfth boke begynneth fo. cc. lxv.

¶ Explicit Boecius de consolatione.

¶ All these workes folowyng be workes by them selfe.

¶ The dreame of Chaucer fo. cc. lxxii.
The assemble of Foules fo. cc. lxxix.
The flour of Curtesy fo. cc. lxxxiii.
Howe Pyte is dede, &c. fo. cc. lxxxvi.
Labele dame sauns mercy fo. cc. lxxxvii.
Anelyda and false Arcyte fo. cc. lxxxxi.
The assemble of Ladyes fo. cc. lxxxxvii.
The conclusyon of thassemble fo. cc. lxxxxix.
The cõplaynt of the Blacke knyght fo. ccc. ii.
A preyse of women fo. ccc. vi.

¶ The house of Fame is deuyded in to thre bookes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth fo. ccc. xiii.
Theseconde boke begynneth fo. ccc. xv.
The thirde boke begynneth fo. ccc. xviii.

¶ Explicit the house of Fame.

The

¶ The testament of Loue is deuy-
ded in to thre bokes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth fo. xxv. rcb.
The seconde boke begynneth fo. xxv. yyy bi.
The thirde boke begynneth fo. xxx. l.

¶ All these workes folowyng be
workes by them selfe.

¶ The lamentacion of Mary Magda-
leyne fo. xxx. lxi.
The remedy of Loue fo. xxx. lxv.
The cõplaynt of Mars & Venus fo. xxlxix.
The complaynt of Mars alone fo. xxlxix.
The cõplaynt of Venus alone fo. xxlxx.
The letter of Cupyde fo. xxlxxi.
A balade of our lady fo. xxlxxvii.
A balade to synge Hey the. iiii. fo. xxlxxviii.
Of the cuckowe & the nyghtyngale fo.
Scogan vnto the ponge lordes and gentyl-
mẽ of the kynges house fo. xxlxxix.
Dyuers other balades of Chaucer. &c.

¶ Thus endeth the table of al the workes.

¶ Eight goodly questyons/ with
their answeres.

SOmtyme in Grece that noble regyon
There were eight clerkes of grete sciẽce
Philosophers of notable discretion
Of whom was vsed/ to proue their prudence
Eight questions/ of derke intellygence
To whiche they answered after their entent
As here bothe appere playne and evydent

¶ The fyrst questyon/ what erthly thyng
Is best/ and to god moost cõmendable
The first clerke answered without tarying
A mannes soule/ euer fermc and stable
In right/ from trauthe nat variable
But nowe also sul sore may we wepe
For couetyse hath brought trauthe a slepe

The seconde/ what thyng is moost odyous
A double mouth sayd the philosopher
With a tongue fyne and a tayle venymous
With a sayre brest/ and a fethy pouche

A corrupte carcyen in a golden tree
It is a monstre in natures lynage
Dne man to haue a double vysage

The thirde/ what is the best bokes
That maye be to a wyse appropriate
A clene lyfe/ was the clerkes answere
Without fraude/ chast/ and temperate
From al desceptes/ and specches inornate
Dncountenaunce/ whiche shal be to displese
No lyte make/ and no smoke wol arise

The fourth questyon/ what mayden may
Be called clene in chastyte
The fourth clerke answered/ whiche alway
Euery creature is a shamed on to lye
Of whom euery man reporteth great honeste
Good maydens kepe your chastyte fortie
And remẽbre that good name is golde worthe

Who is a poore man euer ful of wo
A couetous man/ whiche is a nygon
He that in his herte can neuer saye ho
The more good/ the lesse distributyon
The richer/ the worse of condityon
Hey in this cost/ deperi hym a nygarde
His Gup the bubont is his fyrwarde

Whiche is a riche man withouten fraude
He that can to his good suffyse
What soeuer he hath/ he yeueth god the laude
And kepeth him clene from al couetyse
He despyseth nothyng in vngoodly wyse
His body is here/ his myndc is alone
He is a riche man/ for god dothe him sone

Who is a foole/ in the seuenth demaunde
He that wolde hunte/ and hath no poure
Wyght he myght/ make wolde he demaunde
His maysre great/ his myght nought dure
He thynketh ful faste/ ful lytel may he dure
Thynketh nat he we men shal sayle besyde
God sendeth a stronde ere we aduise herde

Who is a wyse man/ is the eight questyon
He that myght wepe/ and doth no repente
Myght penaunce/ and neuer penaunce
A man mercyful without fraudulence

A wyse man putteth in remembraunce
Sapeng/ had I venged al myne harme
My cloke had nat be furred halfe so warme.
¶ Explicat.

¶ To the kynges moſt noble grace/
and to the lordes and knyght-
tes of the garter.

To you welle of honour and of worthynesse
Our chriſten kyng/ the heire and ſucceſſour
Vnto Juſtinians deuout tenderneſſe
In faithe of Jeſu our redemptour
And to you lordes of the garter floure
Of chevalry/ as men you clepe and cal
The lorde of vertue/ and of grace authour
Graunt the frute of your loſe neuer appal

O liege lorde that haue eke the lykeneſſe
Of Conſtantyne/ thenſample and myrrour
To princes al/ in humble buxumneſſe
To holy churche o verray ſuſtaynour
And pyller of our faith/ and warryour
Agayne the herefyes bytter galle
Do ſouthe do ſouthe/ contynue your ſecour
Holde vp Chriſtes baner lette it nat falle

This yle or this had ben but hethneſſe
Had be of your faith the force and vigour
And yet this day the ſendes crabbydneſſe
Wereth fully to catche a tyme and hour
To haue ony be your lieges a ſharpe ſhoure
And to his ſeruytude vs buxyle and thralle
But aye we truſt in you our protectour
On your conſtaunce we alwayes alle

Commaundeth that no wight haue hardyneſſe
O worthy kyng/ our chriſten emperour
Of the faith to diſpute more or leſſe
Openly amonge people: Her errour
Springeth al day/ and engendreth rumour
Wherfor ſuch lawe/ and forthought may be ſul
Obſerue it wele/ there to be ye deffour
Dothe ſo/ and god in glorie ſhal you ſtal

ye lordes eke/ ſhynyng in noble fame
To whiche appropred is the mayntenaunce
Of Chriſtes cauſe/ in honour of his name
Shout on/ and put his foes to diſtraunce
God wolde ſo/ ſo wolde eke your legiaunce
To tho two pricketh you your duite
Who ſo nat kepeth this double obſeruaunce
Of meryte and honour naked is he

Your ſtyle ſayth/ ye be foes to ſhame
Now the kyth of your fayth the perſeueraunce
In whiche an heape of vs be halte and lame
Our chriſten kyng of Englande & of Fraunce
And ye my lordes with your aſſaunce
And other faithful people that there be
Truſt I to god/ ſhal quenche al this noyſaunce
And this lande ſette in hyghe proſperite

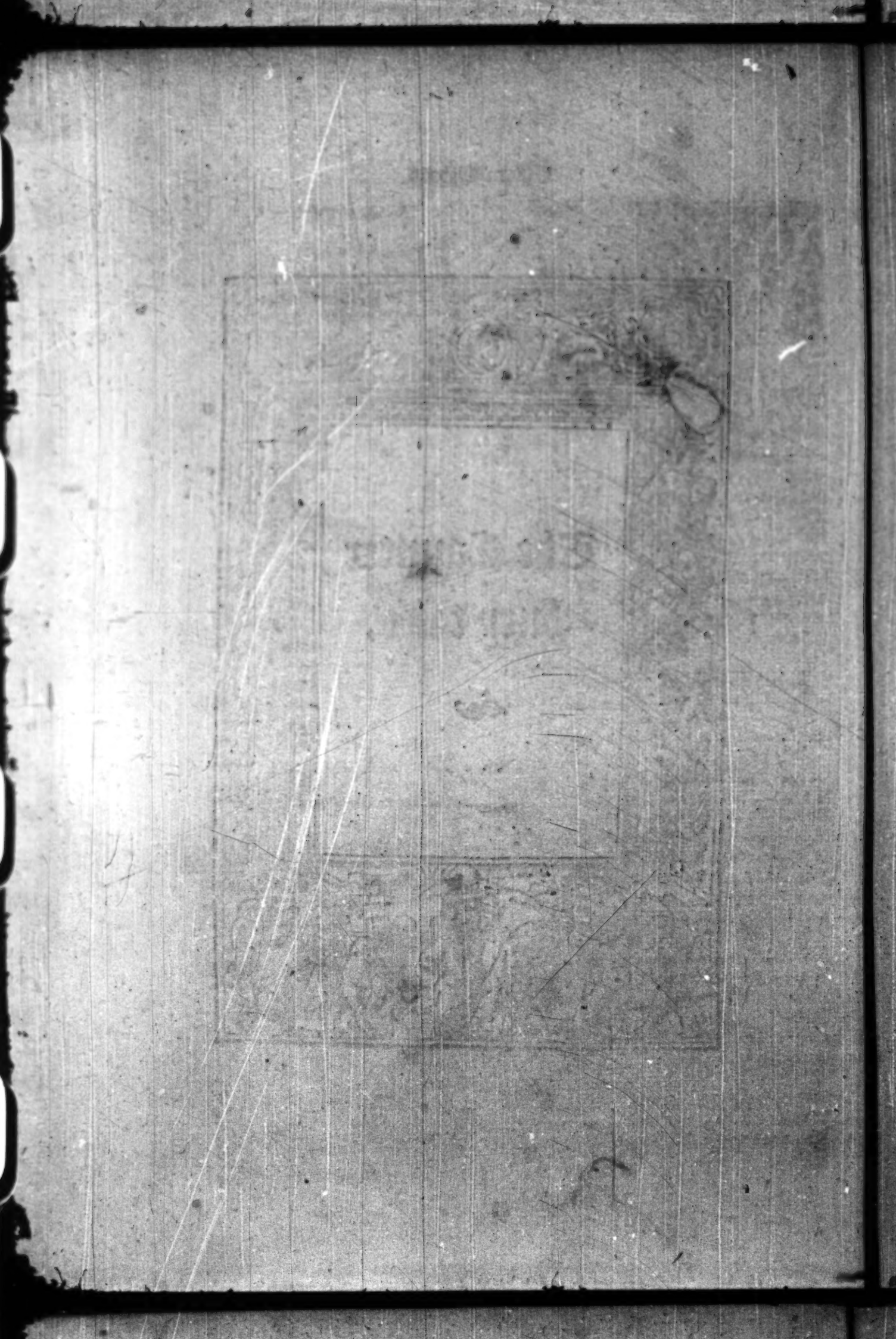
Conqueſt of hyghe proweſſe is for to lawe
The wylde woodneſſe of theſe myſcreaunce
Right to the rote rape ye that ſame
Slepe nat this/ but for goddes pleſaunce
And his mother/ and my ſygnifyaunce
That ye ben of ſayne Georges lygne
Dothe thin ſeruyce and knyghtly obeyſaunce
For Chriſtes cauſe is his/ wil ſhe wery ye

Stiffe ſtande in that/ a ye ſhal grene ſ grame
The foe to peace/ the mour of diſtaunce
That nowe is cruell/ tourne it in to game
Now the kythe of your belene the conſtaunce
Lorde liege/ a golden haue in remembraunce
Lorde of al is the bliſſful Trinyte
Of whoſe vertue the mighty habundaunce
Yeu herte and ſtrength in faithful bayte.
¶ Explicit.

When faithe ſeyleth in purſues ſawes
And lordes heſtes are holden for lawes
And robbery is holden purchace
And lechery is holden ſolace
Than ſhal the londe of Albyon
Be brought to great confuſyon

It falleth for euery gentylman
To ſaye the beſt that he can
In mannes abſence
And the ſothe in his preſence
It cometh by kynde of gentyl blood
To caſte away al ſlouthfulneſſe
And gader together vertues good
The werke of worſchepp hyghteth vertuſſe.
¶ Finis.

The Launter
bury tales.



WHan that Aprill
with his shoures sote
The droughte of Marche
hath perced the roote
And bathed every veyne
in swiche licour
Of whiche vertue engen-
dred is the flour
Whan zephirus eke with his swete breth
Inspired hath every holte and heth
The tendre croppes/and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe his course ronne
And smale fowles maken melodye
That slepen al nyght with open eye
So pryketh hem nature in hir corages
Than longen folke to go on pylgrymages
And palmeres to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes couthe in sondry londes
And specially fro every shires ende
Of Engelonde to Caunterbury they wende
The holy blysful martyr for to seke
That hem hath holpen/whan they were seke.

IT befel that season on a day
In Southwerke at ỹ tabarde as I lay
Redy to go on my pylgrymage
To Caunterbury with deuout corage
That nyght was come in to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaygne
Of sondry folke by auenture yfal
In felaushyp/and pylgrymes were they al
That toward Caunterbury wolde ryde
The chambres and stables were wyde
And wel were they eased at the beste
And shortly whan the sonne was at reste
So had I spoken with hem euerychone
That I was of hir felaushyp anone
And made forwarde erly for to ryse
To take our way there as I you deuyse
But nathelesse/whyle I haue tyme and space
Or that I further in this tale pace
Me thynke it accordaunt to reason
To tel you al the condycyon
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And whiche they were/and of what degre
And eke in what araye that they were in
And at a knyght than wyl I first begyn.

The knyght.

A knyght there was/and that a worthy man
That fro the tyme that he first began
To ryden out/he loued chyualrye
Trouthe/honour/fredom/and curteysye
Ful worthy was he in his lordes warre
And therto had he ridden no man farre
As wel in cristendome as in hethenesse
And euer had honour for his worthynesse
At Alysaundre he was/whan it was wonne
Ful ofte tyme he had the bourde begonne
Aboue all nacyons in Prusse
In Lettowe had he ryden and in Russe
No cristen man so ofte of his degre
In Gernade at the syege had he be
At Algezer/and ridden in Belmarye
At Lyeys was he/and also at Satalye
Whan they were wonne/and in the grete see
At many a noble armee had he be
At mortal batayles had he been fyftene
And foughten for our fayth at Tramyssene
In lystes thryes/and ay slayne his foo
This ilke worthy knyght had been also
Somtyme with the lorde of Palatye
Ayenst another hethen in Turkye
And euermore he had a souereyne prys
And though he was worthy he was wys
And of his port as meke as is a mayde
He neuer yet no vilanye ne sayde
In al his lyf/vnto no maner wight
He was a verey parfyt gentyl knyght
But for to tellen you of his aray
His hors were good/but he was nothyng gay
Of fustyan he wered a gypon
Al besmotred with his habergeon
For he was late come fro his vyage
And wente for to doon his pylgrymage.

The Squyer.

With hym there was his sone a yong squyer
A louer and a lusty bachelere
Wyth lokkes crul as they were layde in presse
Of twenty yere of age he was I gesse
Of his stature he was of euen lengthe
And wonderly delyuer/and of great strengthe

Doo. And

And he had be somtyme in chyuauchye
In Flaundres/ in Artoys/ and in Picardye
And bome hym wel/as of so lytel space
In hope to stande in his lady grace
Embrowded was he/as it were a mede
Al ful of freshe flowres/whyte and rede
Syngyng he was/ or floytynge al the day
He was fresshe as is the monyth of May
Short was his gowne/ with sleues long & wide
Wel coude he sytt on an horse/and fayre ryde
He coude songes make/and wel endyte
Juste and eke daunce/ portray and wel write
So hote he loued/that by nyghtertale
He slepte no more than doothe the nyghtyngale
Curteys he was/lowly and seruysable
And carf te before his fader at the table.

¶ The Squyere & his yoman iiii.

A Yoman had he and seruaunte no mo
At that tyme/for hym lyst to ryde so
And he was clad in cote and hode of grene
A sheef of pecocke arowes bryght and shene
Vnder his belt he bare ful thrifty
Wel coude he dresse his takle yomanly
His arowes drouped not with fethers lowe
And in his hande he bare a mighty bowe
A not heed had he/ with a broune visage
Of wodde craft wel couth he al the vsage
Vpon his arme he bare a gay bracer
And vp his syde a swerde and a bokeler
And on that other syde a gay dagger
Harneysed wel/and sharpe as poynte of spere
A Cristofer on his brest of syluer shene
An horne he bare/ the bawdryke was of grene
A forster was he/ soothly as I gesse.

¶ The Prioresse. iiii.

There was also a Nonne a Prioresse
That of her smylynge was symple and coye
Her gretteste othe was by saynt Loye
And she was called dame Eglentyne
Ful wel she songe the seruyce dyuyne
Entuned in her nose ful semely
And Frenche she spake ful fetously
After the scole of Stratforde at bowe
For Frenche of Paryse was to her vnknowe
At mete was she wel ytaught withal
She lete no morsel fro her lyppes fal
Ne wette her fyngers in her sauce depe
Wel couth she carye a morsel and wel kepe
That no drop ne fel vpon her brest
In curtesy was set ful muche her lest
Her ouerlyp wyped she so clene
That in her cup was no ferthynge sene
Of grece/whan she dronken hadde her draught
Ful semely after her meate she raught
And sykerly she was of great dysporte
And ful plesaunt/and amyable of porte
And peyned her to counterfete chere
Of courte/and to be statelych of manere
And to ben holden dygne of reuerence
But for to speke of her conscyence
She was so charytable and so pytous
She wolde wepe if that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe/ if it were deed or bledde
Of smale houndes had she that she fedde
With roste flesshe/ mylke/ or wastel breed
But sore wepte she if any of hem were deed
Or if men smote hem with a yerde smerte
And al was conscience and tender herte
Ful semely her wymple pynched was
Her nose tretes/her eyen gray as glas
Her mouth smale/and therto softe and red
But sykerly she had a fayre forhed
It was almost a spanne brode I trowe
For hardely she was not vnder growe
Ful fetyse was her cloke as I was ware
Of smal coral aboute her arme she bare
A payre of bedes/gauded al with grene
And theron honge a brooche of golde ful shene
On whiche there was first write a crowned A
And after that (Amor vincit omnia)
Another Nonne with her hath she
That was her chapelleyn/and prestes three

¶ The Monke. v.

A Monke there was/fayre for the maystry
An out ryder/that loued venery
A manly man to ben an abbot able
Ful many a deynte horse had he in stable
And whan he rode men myght his bridel here

Ynge.

Syngyng in a wynsyng bumbarde there
And eke an harpe/ on nothe the chapell bere
Here ye this fayre were fayren of the cut
The cuppe of fayre Wyues and of fayre Maydē
Dyamede it was alle and fynely clerpt
Thus pleye myracles for the spyrytuell peple
And fadre after the werke that the spery
He payne not of the texte a poynte fynde
That sayth/ that fantyes be not holy wryt
Be that a mynde what he is redyng fyt
Is fyttest to a fryste that is mannyssh
Thus is to say/ a mynde out of his clopysse
Thus pleye myracles for the mynde of cristes
And I say for oppynyon mine good
Wherto shulde he studye/ to make him selfe wood
Upon a boke al day in cloystre to pore
Or swynke with his handes/ or labour
As Austyn byt/ how shal the shepe be fedde
Let Austyn haue his swynke to hym reserued
Therfore he was a pryme fayre a ryght
Wrythynge he had as swyft as foule of flyght
Of prickynge and of huntynge for the hare
Was al his lust/ for no cost wolde he spare
I saw his sleues purfyled at the hande
With Grece/ and that the fynest of a lande
And for to fasten his hode vnder the chynne
He had of golde wrought a curyous pynne
A loue knot in the greater ende there was
His heed was balde/ and shone as any glas
And eke his face/ as he had bē and nere
He was a fayre ful fat and wel beloued
His eyen stepe/ and rollynge in his heed
That stemed as a fornays of a leed
His bootes fayre/ his hors in great estate
Now certaynly he was a fayre prelate
He was not pale as a fayre ghost
A fatte swan loued he best of any roost
His palfray was as broune as is a berye

¶ The Frere.

A Frere there was a wanton and a merye
A lymytour/ a ful solempne man
In al the ordres foure is none that can
So muche of daliaunce and fayre langage
He had made ful many a mariage
Of ryche burgeys wymmen at his owne cost
Unto his order he was a noble post
Ful well beloued and famylyer was he
With frankeleyns ouer al in his countre
And with worthy wymmen of the toun
For he had power of confessyoun
As he sayd hym selfe/ more than a curate
For of his ordre he was licenciate
Ful swetely herde he confessyon
And pleasaunt was his absolucyon
He was an esy man to gyue penaunce
There as he wyst to haue a good pytaunce
For vnto a poure ordre for to gyue
Is syngne that a man is wel yshryue
For yf he gaue/ he durst make auaunt
He wyst that a man was repentaunt
For many a man is so harde of herte
That he may not wepe though hym smerte
Therfore in stede of weppynge and prayres
Men moste gyue syluer to the poure freres
His typpet was ay fassed ful of knyues
And pynnes/ for to gyue fayre wyues
And certaynly he had a merry note
Wel coude he synge and playen on a rote
Of yeddynge he bare vtterly the pryse
His nekke was whyte as the flour delyce
Therto stronge he was as a champyoun
And knewe the tauerns wel in euery toun
And euery hostelere and tapstere
Bet than a lazer or a beggere
For vnto suche a worthy man as he
Accordeth nought/ as by his facultie
To haue with lazers suche acquaintaūce
It is not honest/ it may not auaunce
For to deale with suche poraylle
But al with rych/ and selers of vitayle
And ouer al there as profyt sholde arise
Curteys he was/ and lowly of seruyse
There nas no man nowhere so vertuous
He was the beste begger in his hous
And gaue a certayn ferme for the grauntyng
None of his brethern came in his haunting
For thoughe a wydo wolde haue no shoo
(So pleasaunt was his In principio)
Yet wolde he haue a ferthynge er he wente
His purchace was better than the rente
And rage he coude as it were right a whelpe
In loue dayes there coude he muche helpe

Ful

For there he was not lyke a clothyerre
With a threde bare cope/ as a poore frere
But he was lyke a maystir or a pope
Of double worstede was his semy cope
So rounded was as a bel out of presse
Somwhat he lysped for his wantonnesse
To make his Englysshe swete vpon his tong
And in harpynge/ whan he had songe
His eyen twynkeled in his hed aryght
As done the sterres in a frosty nyght
This worthy frere was called Huberde

¶ The Marchaunt viii.

A marchaunt was there with a longe berde
In motley/ on hyghe on his horse he sat
Vpon his hed a flaundrish beuer hat
His botes clasped fayre and fetously
His reasons he spake ful solempnely
Sowyng alway the encrease of his wynnyng
He wolde the see were kepte for any thynge
Betwype Middelborough and Orewel
Wel coude he in eschaunge sel
This worthy man ful wel his wyt byset
There wyst no wyght that he was in det
So stately was he of his gouernaunce
With his bargeyns/ and with his chenysaunce
For sothe he was a worthy man withal
But sothly to sayn/ I not what men hym cal.

¶ The clerke of Oxenforde. viii.

A clerke there was of Oxenforde also
That vnto logyke had longe ygo
As leane was his horse as a rake
And he was nothyng fatte I vnderstake
But lokede holowe/ and therto soberly
Ful thredebare was his ouer courtpy
For he had yet gotten him no benefyce
Ne was nought worldly to haue none office
For him was leuer to haue at his beddes hed
Twenty bookes/ clothed with blacke or red
Of Aristotle/ and of his philosophye
Than robes ryche/ or fydele/ or gay sautrye
But al be that he was a philosophre
Yet had he but lytel golde in cofre
But al that he myght of his frendes hente
On bookes and on lernyng he it spente
And besily gan for the soules praye
Of them that yaf him wherwith to scholeye
Of study took he most cure and hede
Not a worde spake he more than nede
And that was sayd in forme and reuerence
And shorte and quyke/ and ful of hye sentence
Sowynyng in moral vertue was his speche
And gladly wolde he lerne/ and gladly teche.

¶ The sergiante of lawe ix.

A sergeaunt of lawe/ ware and wyse
That often had ben at the parvyse
That was also ful ryche of excellence
Discrete he was/ and of great reuerence
He semed such/ his wordes were so wyse
Justyce he was ful often in assyse
By patent/ and by pleyne commyssyon
For his science/ and his hye renoun
Of fees and robes had he many one
So great a purchasour was no where none
Al was fee symple to hym in effecte
His purchasyng myght not be to hym suspecte
Nowhere so besy a man as he there nas
And yet he semed besyer than he was
In termes had he case and domes al
That fro the tyme of kyng Wyllyam were fal
Therto he coude endyte/ and make a thyng
There coude no wyght pynche at his wrytyng
And every statute coude he pleyne by rote
He rode but homely in a medley cote
Gyrte with a seynt of sylke/ with barres smale
Of his array/ tel I no longer tale.

¶ The Frankeleyn. x.

A Frankeleyn there was in his compayne
Whyte was his berde/ as is the dayesye
Of his complexyon he was sanguyne
Wel loued he by the morowe a soppe in wyne
To lyuen in delyte was euer his wonne
For he was Epicurus owne sonne
That held opinyon/ that pleyne delyte
Was very felicite perfyte
An housholder/ and that a great was he
Saynt Julian he was in his countre

His heed/his ale/was alwey after one
A better varlet myght no where none
Without bake mete was never his house
Of fysshe and flesshe/and that so plenteous
It snewed in his house of mete and drinke
Of al deyntes that men couthe thynke
After the sondry sesons of the yere
So chaunged he his mete/and his soupere
Ful many a fatte partrych had he in mewe
And many a breme/and many a luce in stewe
Wo was his cooke/but his sauce were
Poynaunt/e sharpe/and redy al his gere
His table dormaunt in his hal alway
Stode redy coueryd al the longe day
At festyual tydes were he loode and fyne
Ful ofte tyme he was frygt of the shyre
An anlace and a gypsere al of whyte
Hyng at his gyrdel/ whyte as morow mylke
A shorte dagger hym besyde and a rondel
Was no where such a worthy vauasour.

¶ The Haberdasshere. pi.

An Haberdasshere there was/ and a carpenter
A webbe/a dyer/and a tapycer
Al they were clothed in o lyuere
Of a solempne and a great fraternyte
Ful fresshe and newe her gere apyked was
Her knyues pynched were not with bras
But al with syluer wrought ful clene and well
Her gyrdels and her pouches euerydel
Wel semed eueryche of hem a fayre burgeys
To sytten at a yelde hal/on the dyes bey
Euerych for the wysdome that he can
Was shape/ywis for to ben an alderman
For catayls had they ryght ynough and rent
And eke her wyues wolde it wel assent
And elles certayn they were to blame
It is ful fayre to ben yclepyd madame
And goo to vygilyes al before
And have a mantel royalliche yborne.

¶ The Cook. pii.

A Cook they had with hem for the nones
To boyle the chykens and the mary bones
And poudre marchaunt/tarte/and galyngale
Wel coude he knowe a draught of London ale
He coude roste/sethe/boyle/and fryc
Make mortrewes/and wel bake a pye
But great harme was it/as it thoughte me
That on his shynne a mormal had he
And blankmanger made he with the beste

¶ The Shypman. piii.

A Shypman was there/wonyng fer by weste
For aught I wote/he was of Dertemouthe
He rode vpon a rouncy/as he couthe
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee
A dagger hangyng by a lace had he
Aboute his necke/vnder his arme adowne
The hote somer had made his hewe al broune
And certaynly he was a good felawe
Ful many a draught of wyne had he drawe
Of nyce conscience toke he no kepe
If that he faught/and had the hyer hande
By water he sent hem home to every londe
But of his craft/to rekken wel his tydes
His stremes and his daungers hym besydes
His herbergh/his moone/& his lodemanage
There was none such from Hul to Cartage
Hardy he was/and wyse to vndertake
With many a tempest had his berde be shake
He knewe al the hauens as they were
Fro Gotlande to the Cape de fynysterre
And every cryke in Britayne & in Spayne
His barge was called the Maudelayne.

¶ The doctour of phisyke. piiii.

With hym there was a doctour of phisyke
In al this worlde ne was there none hym lyke
To speke of phisyke/and of surgerye
For he was grounded in astronomye
He kepte his pacient a ful great del
In houres/by his magyke naturel
Wel coude he fortune the ascendent
Of his ymages for his pacyent
He knewe the cause of every maladye
Were it of colde/hete/moyste/or drye
And where engendred and of what humour
He was a very perfyte practysyour

The

The cause yknowe/and of his harme the rote
Anone he gaue to the sycke man his bote
Ful redy had he his apoteraries
To sende hym drugges and his letuaries
For eche of hem made other for to wynne
Her frendshyp nas not newe to begynne
Wel knewe he the olde Esculapius
And Dioscorides/and eke Rufus
Olde Hippocrates/Haly/and eke Galien
Serapion/Rasis/and also Auycen
Auerroys/Damascene/and Constantyn
Bernarde/Gatisden/and Gilbertyn
Of his dyete mesurable was he
For it was of no superfluyte
But of great nourysshynge/and digestyble
His study was but lytel on the Byble
In sanguyne and in perce he clad was al
Lyned with Taffata/and with sendal
And yet he was but easy of dispence
He kepte that he wanne in tyme of pestylence
For golde in Physyke is a cordyal
Therfore he loued golde in special.

The wyfe of Bathe. pro.

A good wyfe there was besyde Bathe
But she was somdel dees/and that was scathe
Of clothe makyng she had suche an haunte
She passed hem of Ypre/and of Gaunte
In al the parysshe wyfe ne was there none
That to the offrynge before her shulde gone
And if there dyd/certayn tyxt wrothe was she
That she was al out of charite
Her coverchefs ful fyne were of grounde
I durst swere they weyden ten pounde
That on a Sonday were vpon her heed
Her hosen were of fyne scarlet reed
Ful streyte ystrapned/and shoes ful newe
Bolde was her face/and feed was her hewe
She was a worthy woman al her lyue
Husbandes at the chirche dore had she fyue
Withouten other company in youthe
But therof nedeth not to speke as nouthe
And thryse had she ben at Hierusalem
She had passed many a strange streme
At Rome had she ben/and at Boleyne
In Galys at saynt James/and at Coleyne
She coude moche of wandrynge by the weye
Gat tothed was she softely for to seye
Vpon an amblere esily she sat
Ywympled wel/and on her heed an hat
As brode as is a bokeler or a targe
A foot mantel aboute her hyppes large
And on her fete a payre of spurres sharpe
In felyshyp wel coude she laughe and carpe
Of remedyes of loue she coude parchaunce
For she coude of that arte the olde daunce.

The Person. pro.

A Good man there was of relygyon,
And was a poore person of a toun,
But ryche he was of holy thought and werke
He was also a lerned man/and a clerke
That Christes gospel trewly wolde preche
His parysshens deuoutly wolde he teche
Benygne he was and wonder diligent
And in aduersyte ful patyent
And suche he was proued ofte sythes
Ful lothe were hym to curse for his tythes
But rather wolde he yeuen out of doute
Vnto his poore parysshens aboute
Of his offrynge/and of his substaunce
He coude in lytel thynge haue suffysaunce
Wyde was his parysshe/and houses fer asonder
But he ne lefte nat/for rayn ne thonder
In sykenesse nor in myschefe for to vysyte
The ferreste in his parysshe/moche and lyte
Vpon his fete/and in his hande a staf
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf
That fyrst he wrought/and afterward taught
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught
And this fygure he added eke therto
That if golde ruste/what shulde yron do
For if a preest be foule/on whom we truste
No wonder is a lewde man to ruste
And shame it is/if a preest take keepe
To se a shytten shepherde/and a clene shepe
Wel ought a preest ensample for to yeue
By his clennesse/how his sheep shulde lyue
He sette not his benefyce to hyre
And lefte his sheep accombred in the myre
And ran to London to saynt Poules
To seken hym a chaunterye for soules

Or with

Dr with a bostfrshede to be with holde
But he wolde at home/and kept wel his folde
So that the wolfe ne made hem not mescarye
He was a shepherde/and not a mercenarye
And though he holy were and vertuous
He was not to synfal vsed despytous
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne
But in his techyng discrete and benigne
To drawe men folde to heuen with fayrnesse
By good ensample/this was his besynesse
But if it were any person obstynate
Whether he were of hye or lowe estate
Hym wolde he sharply snybbe for the nonce
A better preest I trowe no where none is
He wayted after no pompe ne reuerence
Ne maked hym no spyced conscience
But Cristes lore/and his apostles twelue
He taught/ but first he folowed it hym selue.

¶ The Plowman pvii.

Wt him there was a Plowman his brother
That had yladde of dunge many a fother
A trewe swynker and a good was he
Lyuyng in peace/ and parfyte charyte
God loued he best with al his herte
At al tymes/though he gamed or smerte
And than his neyghbours right as hym selfe
He wolde threshe/and therto dyke and delfe
For Cristes sake/for euery poore wyght
Without hyre/if it lay in his myght
His tythes payde he ful fayre and wel
Bothe of his propre swynke/and of his catel
In a tabarde he rode/ vpon a mare
There was also a Reue/and a Myllare
A Sompnour/and a Pardoner also
A Manciple/and my selfe/there was no mo.

¶ The Myller pviii.

The Myller was a stoute carle for ꝑ nones
Ful byggе he was of brawne/& eke of bones
That proued wel/for ouer al there he cam
At wrastlyng/ he wolde haue away the ram
He was short shouldred/a thikke gnarre
Ther nas no dore/but he wold heue of ꝑ barre
Or breke it/at a renning with his heed
His berde as any sowe or fox was reed
And therto brode/ as it were a spade
Vpon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte/and theron stode a tuft of heres
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres
His nosethrles blacke were and wyde
A swerde and a bokeler bare he by his syde
His mouthe as great was as a furnays
He was a iangler and a goliardeys
And that was most of synne & of harlotrys
Wel couthe he stele corne/ and tolde it thryse
And yet he had a thombe of golde parde
A whyte cote and a blewe hode wered he
A bagge pype wel couthe he blowe & sowne
And therwithal brought he vs out of towne.

¶ The Maniple pix.

A gentle Maniple there was of the temple
Of whiche al catours might taken ensample
For to bey wyse/in byeng of vitayle
For whether he payde/or tooke by tayle
Algate he wayted so in his achate
That he was ay before/ in good estate
Now is not that of god a ful fayre grace
That suche a lewde mans wyt shal pace
The wysdome of an heape of learned men
Of maysters had he mo than thryse ten
That were of lawe expert/and curyous
Of whiche there was a doseyn in that house
Worthy to bey stewardes of rente and lande
Of any lorde that is in Englande
To make him lyue by his propre good
In honour dettelesse/but if he were wode
Or lyue as scarsly as hym lyste desyre
And able to helpen al a shyre
In any case that might fallen or happe
And yet the Maniple set al hem cappe.

¶ The Reue pp.

The Reue was a sclender colerike man
His berde was shaue as nye as euer he can
His heere was by his eeres rounde yshorne
His toppe was docked lyke a preest byforne
Ful longe were his legges and ful lene
Ylyke a staffe/there was no calfe yſene

Wel

Wel couth he kepe a ganer and a bynne
There was noȝ auditour coude on hym wynne
Wel wyst he ȝp the drought/and by the rayne
The pryckynge of his seed/and of his grayne
His lordes sheepe/his neet/and his deyne
His swyne/his hors/his store/ and his pultrie
Were wholy in his Reuys gouernynge
And by his couenaunt yaue he rekenynge
Sithe his lorde was twenty yere of age
There coude no man bringe hym in arerage
There nas baylif/heerd/ne none other hyne
That he ne knewe his sleyght and his couyne
They were a drad of hym as of the deethe
His dwellynge was ful fayre vpon a heethe
With grene trees shadowed was his place
He couth better than his lorde purchace
Ful riche he was astored pryuely
His lorde he coude wel plese subtylly
To yeue and lene hym of his owne good
And haue a thanke/and yet a cote and hode
In youthe he had lerned a good mystere
He was a wel good wyght/a carpenter
This Reue sat vpon a right good stot
That was al pomel grey/and hight Scot
A long surcote of perse vpon he hade
And by his syde he bare a rusty blade
Of Northfolke was this Reue/of which I telle
Besyde a toune/men clepen it Baldeswelle
Tucked he was/as is a frere aboute
And euer he rode hyndereste of the route.

¶ The Sompnour. pyi.

A Sompnour was there with vs in ꝑ place
That had a fyre redde cherubyns face
For sauseflem he was/with eyen narowe
As hote he was/and lecherous as a sparowe
With scaled browes blacke/ and pylled berde
Of his vysage chyldren were sore aferde
There nas quycksylueꝛ/lytarge/ne brymstone
Borace/ceruse/ne oyle of tartre none
Ne oynement that wolde clense or byte
That hym myght helpe of his whelkes white
Ne of his knobbes sittynge on his cheekes
Wel loued he garleke/onyons/and eke leekes
And for to drynke stronge wyne red as blood
Than wolde he speke and crye as he were wood
And whan he had wel dronke the wyne
Than wolde he speke no worde but latyne
A fewe termes had he/two or thre
That he had lerned out of some decre
No wonder is/he herde it al the daye
And ye knowen wel ese howe that a iaye
Can clepe watte/as wel as can the pope
But whoso couthe in other thynge hym grope
Than had he spent al his philosophye
(Aquesto quod iuris) wolde he crye
He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A better felawe shulde a man not fynde
He wolde suffre for a quarte of wyne
A good felawe to haue his concubyne
A twelue monthe/and excuse hym at the ful
Ful prudely ese a fynche couthe he pul
And if he fonde owhere a good felawe
He wolde teche hym to haue none awe
In suche case/of the archedeknes curse
But if mans soule were in his purse
For in his purse he shulde ypunysshed be
Purse is the archedeknes helle/sayd he
But wel I wote he lyed right in dede
Of cursyng oughte eche synful man drede
For cursyng wol slee/right as assoylyng saueth
And also ware hym of a Sygnificauit
In daunger had he at his owne gyse
The yonge gyrles of the diocyse
And knew her counsayle/and was of her rede
A garlonde had he set vpon his hede
As great as it were for an alestake
A bucklere had he maked hym of a cake.

¶ The Pardoner. pyii.

With hym there rode a gentil Pardoner
Of Rouncyual/ his frende and his compere
That straught was come fro ꝑ court of Rome
Ful loude songe he/ come hyder loue to me
This Sompnour bare hym a styffe burdoun
Was neuer trompe of halfe so great a soun
This Pardoner had heere as yelowe as wexe
But smothe it hynge/as doth a strike of flaxe
By ounces hynge his lokkes that he had
And therwith he his sholders ouerspradd
But thynne it lay by culpons one and one
But hode for iolyte wered he none

For

For it was trussed vp in his walet
Him thought he rode al of the newe set
Dissheuyled saue his cappe he rode al bare
Swyfte glarynge eyen had he as an hare
A vernacle had he sowed vpon his cappe
His walet bifore him in his lappe
Bretful of pardons come from Rome al hote
A voice he had as smale as hath a gote
No berde had he/ ne neuer shulde haue
As smoth it was as it were newe shaue
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare
But of his craft fro Berwyke vnto Ware
Ne was there suche another pardoner
For in his male had he a pilowe bere
Which as he sayd/ was our ladyes veyle
He sayd he had a gobbet of the sayle
That sayncte Peter had whan that he went
Vpon the see tyll Jesu Christ him hent
He had a crosse of latoun ful of stones
And in a glasse he had pygges bones
But with these relyques whan that he fonde
A poure person dwellyng vpon londe
Vpon a day he gate him more money
Than that person gate in monthes two
And thus with fayned flatterynge and japes
He made the person and the people his apes
But trewely to tellen at the laste
He was in churche a noble ecclesiaste
Wel coude he rede a lessone or a storie
But alderbest he sange an offertorie
For wel he wyst/ whan that songe was songe
He muste preche/ and wel affyle his tonge
To wynne syluer as he wel coude
Therfore he songe so merely and loude.

Nowe haue I tolde you shortly in a clause
The state/ the araye/ nombre/ & eke the cause
Why that assembled was this compayne
In Southwerke at this gentyl hostelrye
That hyght the Tabarde fast by the Belle
But nowe is tyme to you for to telle
How that we baren vs that ilke nyght
Whan we were in that hostelry alyght
And after wol I tell of our viage
And al the remenaunt of our pylgrymage
But first I pray you of your curtesye
That ye ne arette it not my vilanye

Though that I playnely speke in this mattere
To telle you her wordes and eke her chere
Ne thynke I speke her wordes properly
For this ye knowen as wel as I
Who shal telle a tale after a manne
He moste reherce as nyghe as euer he canne
Euerych wyght/ if it be in his charge
Al speke he neuer so rudely ne large
Or elles he moste telle his tale vntrewe
Or feyne thynges/ or fynde wordes newe
He may not spare al though he were his brother
He moste as wel saye o wyght as another
Crist spake him selfe ful brode in holy writte
And wel I wote no vilanye is itte
Eke Plato sayth/ who so can him rede
The wordes moste be cosyn to the dede
Also I pray you for to forgyue it me
Al haue I not set folke in her degree
Here in this tale as they shulde stande
My wytte is shorte ye may wel vnderstande.

Greate chere made our hoste vs euerychon
And to the supper sette he vs anon
And serued vs with vitayle at the beste
Strong was the wyne/ & wel dyspiced he leste
A semely man our hoste was with al
For to ben a marshal in a halle
A large man he was with eyen stepe
A fayrer burgeys is there none in chepe
Bolde of his speche/ wyse and wel ytaught
And of manhode him lacked right naught
Eke therto he was a right mery man
And after supper playen he began
And spake of mirthe amonge other thynges
Whan that we had made our reckenynges
And sayd thus/ nowe lordynges trewely
Ye ben to me welcome right hertely
For by my trouthe if I shulde nat lye
I sawe not this yere so mery a compayne
Atones/ in this herbergh as is nowe
Fayne wolde I don you mirthe I wyste how
And of a mirthe I am right now bethought
To don you ese/ and it shal coste nought
Ye goon to Canterbury god them speede
The blysful martyr quyte you your mede
And wel I wote as ye goon by the waye
Ye shapen you to talken and to playe

For

For trewly comforte ne myrthe is there none
To ryden by the waye as domme as a stone
And therfore wolde I make you disporte
As I sayd erst/ and done you some comforte
And if you lyketh all by one assent
For to stonden at my iugement
And for to worchen as I shal you say
To morowe whan we ryden on the way
Now lene by my fathers soule that is deed
But ye be mery I wol gyue you myne heed
Holde vp your handes without more speche.
Our counsayle was not longe for to seche
Vs thought it was not worth to make it wise
And graunted hym without more auyse
And bade him say his verdit as him lest
Lordinges (quod he) now herkeneth for the best
But take it not I praye you in disdayne
This is the poynt to speke it plat and playne
That eche of you to shorte with oures way
In this viage/ shal tel tales tway
To Canterbery warde I mene it so
And homwardes he shal tel tales other two
Of auentures whilom that hap befel
And whiche of you that beareth him best of al
That is to say/ that telleth in this case
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shal haue a supper at our aller cost
Here in this place sytting by this post
Whan that we comen ayen from Canterbery
And for to make you the more mery
I wol my seluen goodly with you ryde
Right at myne owne cost and be your gyde
And who that wol my iugement withsay
Shal paye al that we spende by the way
And if ye vouchsafe that it be so
Telle me anon without wordes mo
And I wol erly shape me therfore
This thyng was graunted and our othes swore
With ful gladde herte/ and prayden him also
That he wolde vouchsafe for to do so
And that he wolde be our gouernour
And of our tales iuge and reportour
And sette a supper at a certayne pryce
And we wolden be ruled at his deuyse
In hye and lowe/ and thus by one assent
We ben accorded to the iugement
And therupon the wyne was fette anone
We dronken/ and to reste wente ech one
Without any lenger taryenge
Amorowe whan the day gan to spryng
Vp rose our host/ and was our aller cocke
And gadered vs al in a flocke
And forthe we ryden a litel more than paas
Vnto the watering of saynt Thomas
And there our host began his horse arest
And sayd: lordes herkeneth if you lest
Ye wote your forwarde/ and I it recorde
If eue songe and morowe songe accorde
Lette se nowe who shal telle the first tale
As euer I mote drynke wyne or ale
Who so is rebel to my iugement
Shal paye for al that by the way is spent
Now draweth cutte or that we fyrther twynne
He whiche that hath the shortest shal begynne.

Sir knyght (quod he) my maister and my lorde
Now draweth cutte/ for that is myne accorde
Cometh nere (quod he) my lady prioresse
And ye sir clerke/ lette be your shamefastnesse
Ne studyeth nat/ lay hande therto euery man
Anone to drawe euery wight began
And shortly for to tellen as it was
Were it by auenture/ or by shorter cause
The sothe is this/ the cutte fyl to the knyght
Of whiche ful blyth and glad was euery wight
And telle he must his tale as it was reason
By forwarde/ and by compositon
As ye han herde/ what nedeth wordes mo
And whan this good man saw that it was so
As he that wyse was and obedyent
To kepen his forwarde by his free assent
He sayd/ sithen I shal begynne the game
What welcome cutte a goddes name
Now lete vs ryde/ and herkeneth what I say
And with that worde we ryden forth our way
And he began with right a mery chere
His tale anone/ right as ye shal here.

¶ Thus endeth the prologues of the Canterbury tales/ and here folowe the knyghtes tale.

Here begynneth the knyghtes tale.

Hylom/ as olde stories tellen vs
Ther was a duke ꝑ hight Theseus
Of Athenes he was lorde & gouernour
And in his tyme swiche a conquerour
That greatter was noon vnder the sonne
Full many a riche contree hadde he won
What with his wysedom/ & his chyualry
He conquered all the regne of Femyny
That whylom was ycleped Scithia
And wedded the queene Ypolita
And broughte hir hoom with hym in his contree
With moche glorie and solempnytee
And eke hir yonge suster Emely.
And thus with victorie and with melody
Let I this worthy duke to Athenes ryde
And all his hoost in armes hym by syde
And ryden I/ as it were to longe to here.
I wolde haue telde fully the maneer
How Wonnen was the regne of Femyny
By Theseus/ and by his chyualry
And of the grete batayle for the nones
Betwene Athenes and Amasones
And how besyeged was Ypolyta
The worthy hardy queene of Scithia
And of the feest/ ꝑ was at hir weddynge
And of the tempest at hir hoom comynge
But all ꝑ thyng/ I moote as nowe forbere
I haue god wotte/ a large feeld to ere
And wayke been the oxen in the plowe
The remenant of my tale is longe ynowe
I wyll not letten eke/ noon of this route

Let euery felowe tell his tale about
And let se nowe/who shall the supper wyn
And there I leste/ I wyll agayne begyn.

This duke/of whom I make mencyoune
Whan he was come/ almoost to the towne
In all his wele and his moost pride
He was ware/ as he cast his eye aside
Where that there kneled in the highe way
A rompany of ladys/ two and two
Eche after other/ cladde in clothes blake
But suche a crye/ & suche a wo they make
That in this worlde/ nys creature lyuinge
That euer herde suche a waymentynge
And of this crye/ they nolde neuer stynten
Tyll they the reynes of his bridell henten
What folke be ye/ yͭ at myn home cõmyng
Perturben so my feest with cryeng
Quod Theseus: haue ye so great enuy
Of myn honour/that thus cõplayne & cry:
Or who hath you myswrought/ or offended:
Nowe telleth me/ if it may be amended.
And why that ye be clothed thus in blake:
The oldest lady of them all spake,
Whan she had swouned wt a deedly chere
That it was ruthe for to se and here
She said lorde/to whom fortune hath yeue
Victory/ & as a conqueroure to lyue
Nought grieueth vs your glory & honour
But we beseke you of mercy & socour.
And haue mercy on our wo and distresse
Some drope of pyte/through thy gentylnesse
Vpon vs wretched wymmen/ let thou fall
For certes lorde/there nys none of vs all
That she ne hath be a duchesse or a quene
Nowe be we caytyfes/as it is well seene
Thanked be fortune/and her false whele
That non estate assureth for to be wele.
Nowe certes lorde/ to abyde your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemence
We haue be waytyng all this fourtenyght
Helpe vs lorde/sythe it lyeth in thy myght.

I Wretche/ that wepe and wayle thus
Whylom wyfe to kyng Lampanneus
That starfe at Thebes/cursed be ye day
And all we that ben in this aray

And make all this lamentacyon
We losten all our husbondes at that toun
Whyle that the siege there about laye
And yet the olde Creon (wel a waye)
That lorde is nowe of Thebes cyte
Fulfylled of yre and of iniquite
He for dispyte/and for his tyranny
To done the dede bodyes vylanye
Of all our lordes/whiche that ben slawe
Hath all the bodyes on an heape ydrawe
And wyll nat suffre hem/ by none assent
Neyther to be buryed/ne to be brent
But maketh houndes to eate hem in dispyte
And with that worde/without more respite
They fallen grofly/and cryen pytously
Haue on vs wretched wymmen some mercy
And let our sorowe synke in thyn hert.
This gentle duke doun fro his hors stert
With hert pytous/ whan he herde hem speke
Hym thought that his herte wolde breke
Whan he sawe hem so pytous & so mate
That whylom were of so great astate
And on his armes/he hem all vp hent
And hem comforted in full good entent
And swore his othe/as he was true knyght
He wolde don so ferforthly his myght
Vpon the tyrante Creon hem to wreke
That all the people of Grece shulde speke
How Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he that had his dethe full well deserued
And rydyng anon without more abode
His baner he displayed/and forthe rode
To Thebes warde/ and all his hoost beside
No nere Athenes wolde he go ne ryde
Ne take his ease fully halfe a day
But onward on his way that nyght he lay
And sent anone Ypolita the queene
And Emely her yonge syster shene
Vnto the toun of Athenes to dwell
And forth he rydeth/his nys no more to tell.

The red statue of Mars wt spere & targe
I So shyneth in his whyte baner large
That all the feldes glyttren vp & doun
And by his baner/ borne is his penoun
Of golde ful ryche/ in which there was ybete
The mynotaure/that he slow in Crete

Thus

Thus endeth that duke/this conqueroure
And in his hoste of chyualry the floure
Tyll that he came to Thebes/ & alyght
Fayre in a felde/there as he thought to fyght
But shortly for to speken of this thyng
With Creon/whiche was of Thebes kyng
He faught/ & slewe him manly as a knyght
In playne batayle/ & put his folke to flyght
And after a sawte he wan the cyte after
And rente adoune wall/ sparre/ & rafter
And to the ladyes/he restored agayn
The bodyes of her husbandes ꝑ were slayn
To done obsequies/ as tho was the gyse
But it were all to longe for to deuyse
The great clamour/and the wepyng eyen
That the ladyes made at the brennyng
Of the bodyes/and the great honour
That Theseus/the noble conquerour
Doth to ꝑ ladies/whan they from him wēt
But shortly to tellen is myne entent
Whan ꝑ this worthy duke/this Theseus
Hath Creon slayne/and wan Thebes thus
Stylle in the felde he toke all nyght his rest
And dyd with all the contree as hym lest
To ransake in the taas of bodyes dede
(Hem for to strype of harneys & of wede)
The pyllours dyd her busynesse and cure
After the batayle and the discomfyture.
And so befell/that in the taas they founde
Thrugh gyt wī many a grenous wounde
Two yonge knyghtes lyeng by and by
Bothe in armes ſame/wrought full richely
Of whiche two/Arcyte hyght that one
And that other hyght Palamon
Not fully quycke/ne fully dede they were
But by her cote armours/ and by her gere
The heraudes knewe hem best in speciall
As tho that were of the bloode royall
Of Thebes/and of sustren two yssoone
Out of the taas ꝑ pyllours hath hem done
And han hem carryed softe as to the tent
Of Theseus/and he full soone hem sent
To Athenes/ to dwellen there in prysone
Perpetuell/he nolde hem raunsone
And whan this worthy duke hath thus don
He took his host/ and home he gothe anon
With alle his wele/ and his conquerynge.
And there he lyueth in ioye and honour
Terme of his life/ what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour/in angwyssh and in wo
Dwelleth Palamon/ & his felawe Arcyte
For euermore/ther may no gold hem quyte.

Thus passeth yere by yere/ & day by day
Tyll it fell ones in a morowe of May
That Emely/that fayrer was to sene
Than is the lylly/vpon the stalke grene
And fresscher than the May/with flowres newe
For with the rose colour strof her hewe
I not whiche was the fayrer of hem two
Er it was day/ as was her wont to do
She was arysen/and all redy dyght
For May wolle haue no slogardy a nyght
The sesons prycketh euery gentyll herte
And maketh it out of his slepe sterte
And sayth arys/ and do thy obseruaūce
This maketh Emely to haue remēbraunce
To don honour to May/and for to ryse
Yclothed was she fresshe for to deuyse
Her yelowe heare was broyded in a tresse
Behynde her backe/a yerde longe I gesse
And in the gardyn at sonne vprysyng
She walketh vp and doun as her lyst
She gadereth flowres/party whyte & reed
To make a subtyll garlande for her heed
And as an angell/heuenly she songe
The great tour/ ꝑ was so thycke & stronge
Wherin the knyghtes were in prysone
Of whiche I tolde you/and tell shall
Was euen ioynaunt to the gardyn wall
There as this Emely had her playeng
Bright was the sonne/ & clere that morwenyng
And Palamon/this woo full prysoner
As was his won/by leaue of his gayler
Was ryssen/& romed in a chambre an hyghe
In whiche he all the noble cyte syghe
And eke the gardyn/ful of braunches grene
There as this fresshe Emely the shene
Was in her walke/ & romed vp and doun.
This sorowful prysoner/ this Palamon
Goth in his chambre romyng to and fro
And to him selfe complaynyng of his wo
That he was borne/ full oft he sayd alas

And so befell by auenture or cas
That thrugh a wyndow thrist of many a bar
Of yren grete/ & square as any spar
He caste his eyen vpon Emelia
And therwith he blent and cryed/ ha.
As thoughe he stongen were to the herte
And with that crye Arcite anon vp sterte
And sayd/ Cosyn myn/what cyleth the
That arte so pale and deedly for to se?
Why cryest thou? who hath do the offence?
For goddes sake/take all in patience
Our prison/for it may none other be
Fortune hath yeuen vs this aduersyte.
Some wyked aspect or disposicion
Of Saturne/by some constellacion
Hath yeuen vs this/ altho we had it swom
So stode the heuen/whan þ we were born
We mote endure/this is short and playn.
This Palamon answerde/& said agayn:
Cosyn forsoth/ of this opinyon
Thou hast a vayne ymagynacion
This prison caused me not to crye
But I was hurt right now thrugh myn ye
Into myn herte/that wyll my bane be
The fayrnesse of a lady that I se
Yonde in the gardyn/romyng to and fro
Is cause of all my crying and wo
I not wher she be woman or goddesse
But Venus it is/ soothly as I gesse
And therwith all on knees doun he fyll
And sayd: Venus/if it be thy wyll
Thus in this gardyn/thus to transfygure
Before me/sorowfull wrecched creature
Out of this prison helpe that we may scape
And if our destiny be so shape
By eterne Worde/to dyen in prison
Of our lynage haue some compassyon
That is so lowe ybrought by tyranny.
And with that Worde Arcyte gan espy
Where as the lady romed to and fro
And with that sight her beute hurt him so
That if that Palamon were wounded sore
Arcite was hurt as moche as he/ or more
And with a sygh he said pitously
The fresshe beute sleeth me sodenly
Of her that rometh in the yonder place
And but I haue her mercy and her grace
That I may seen her at the leste way
I nam but deed/ there nys no more to say.

This Palamon/whan he these wordes herd
Dispytously he lokede/ and answerd:
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play
Nay quod Arcite/ in ernest by my fay
God helpe me so/ me lyst full yuell to play
This Palamon gan knyt his browes tweyn
It were (quod he) to the no great honour
To be false/ ne for to be traytour
To me/that am thy cosyn & thy brother
Ifsworne full depe/and echo of vs to other
That neuer for to dyen in the payne
Tyll that the dethe departe vs twayne
Neyther of vs in loue to hyndre other
Ne in none other case my leue brother
But that thou shuldest truly further me
In euery case/as I shulde further the
This was thyn othe/and myn also certayn
I wote it well/ thou darst it not withsayn
Thus arte thou of my counsell out of doute
And now be thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To loue my lady/ whom I loue and serue
And euer shall/tyll that myn herte sterue.
Now certes false Arcite thou shalt not so
I loued her first/ and tolde the my wo
As to my counsell/ & to my brother sworne
To further me/as I haue tolde before
For wherfe thou art ybounden/as a knyght
To helpen me/if it lye in thy myght
Or elles arte thou false/ I dare well sayne
This Arcite full proudly spake agayne.
Thou shalt (quod he) be rather false than I
And thou arte false I tell the vtterly.
For paramour I loued her first or thou
What wilt thou sayn/thou wist it nat or now
Whether she be woman or goddesse
Thyne is affection of holynesse
And myn is loue/ as to a creature
For which I tolde the myn auenture
As to my cosyn/and my brother sworne
Suppose that thou louedst her byforne
Wost thou not well the olde clerkes saw:
That/ Who shall gyue a louer any law?
Loue is a greter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeuen to any erthly man.

And

And therfore pourtyse lawe/ I sustse decre
Ye broken all day for loue in ese degre
A man mote nedes loue maugre his herd
He may nat flen it though he shuld be derd
All be she mayde/ Wydo we/ or Wyfe
And ese it is not hys help all thy lyfe
To stonden in her grace/ nomore shall I
For Well thou wost thy selfe Verely
That thou and I be dampned to puson
Perpetuell/ No gayneth no raunson
We fleyten/ as dyd the houndes for ỳ bone
That fought al day/ & yet her pte was non
Ther cam a cut/ While ỳ they Wer so wroth
And bare away the bone from hem both
And therfore/ at Kynges court my brother
Eche man for hym selfe/ there is non other
Loue if thou lyst/ for I loue and ay shall
And soothly lefe brother this is all
Here in this puson mote We endure
And euerych of vs take his auenture.
Gret was the stryfe betwyx hem tWey
If that I had leyser for to sey
But to theffect/ It hanped on a day
To telle it you shortly as I may.
A Worthy duke that hyght Perithous
That felo We Was to duke Theseus
Syth thylke day ỳ they were chyldren lyte
Was come to Athenes/ his felo W to vysyte
And for to play/ as he Was wonte to do
For in this Worlde he loued no man so
And he loued hym as tenderly agayne
As Well they loued/ as olde bokes sayne
That whan ỳ one Was dede/ soothly to tell
His felo W Went & sought hym do Wyn hell
Duke Perithous loued Well Arcite
And had hym knowen at Thebes yere by yere
And fynally at request and prayere
Of Perithous/ without ony raunson
Duke Theseus let hym out of puson
Frely to gon/ whether hym lyst ouer all
In suche a gyse/ as I you tellen shall.
This Was ỳ forWarde/ playnly to endyte
Betwyxe duke Theseus and hym Arcyte
That if so were/ that Arcite Were yfounde
Euer in his lyfe/ by day/ nyght or stounde
In any contre of this duke Theseus
And he Were caught/ it Was accorded thus
That with a swerde he shulde lese his heed
There nas none other remedy ne reed
But taketh his leaue/ & homWard hym sped
Let hym be Ware/ his neckе stpeth to Wedde
How great sorow We suffreth now Arcite:
The dethe he feleth throughe his herte smyte
He wepeth/ wayleth/ & cryeth pitously
To sleen hym selfe he Wayteth prively
And sayd/ alas the day that I Was borne
Now We is my prison Worse than beforne
Now We ys me/ shapen eternally to dWell
Nought in purgatory/ but in hell
Alas that euer I knewe Perithous
For els had I dWelt With Theseus
Yfettered in his prison euer mo
Then had I be in blysse/ and nat in Wo
Only the syght of her/ Whom that I serue
Though ỳ I neuer her grace may deserue
Wolde haue sufficed right ynough for me
O dere cosyn Palamon (quod he)
Thyn is the victory of this auenture
Full blysfull in prison mayst thou endure
In prison/ Nay certes but in paradyse
Well hath fortune to the tourned the dyse
That hast the syght of her/ and I thabsence
For possible is/ sythnes thou hast her presence
And arte a knyght/ a Worthy man & able
That by some cas/ syn fortune is changeable
Thou mayst sometyme to thy desyre attayne
But I that am exyled/ and barayne
Of all grace/ and in so great dispeyre
That there nys Worde/ erthe/ lyre/ ne eyre
Ne creature/ that of hem maked is
That may me helpe/ or don comfort in this
Well ought I sterue in Wanhope & distresse
FarWell my syfe/ my lust/ & my gladnesse
Alas/ Why playnyn men so in commune
Of purueyaunce of god/ or of fortune
That yeueth hem full ofte in many agyse
Well bette than hem selfe can deuyse
Some man desyreth to haue rychesse
That cause is of his murdre or syknesse
And some man Wold out of his prison fayn
That in his house/ is of his meyne slayne
Infynyte harmes ben in this matere
We Wote not What thyng We prayen here

We fareth as he/ that dronke is as a mouse
A dronkey man Wote Well/ he hath an house
But he wot nat/ which the right Way thider
And to a dronkey man the Way is slyder
And eeke in this Wolde so fareth We
We seken fast after felicite
But We go wronge full ofte truly
Thus may we say all/ and namely I
That Wendery/ and had a great opinion
That if I might scape fro prison
Than had I ben in ioye and parfite hele
There now We I am exiled fro my wele
Sithe that I may nat seen you Emely
I nam but dede/ there nys no remedy.
¶ Upon that other syde Palamon
When that he Wist Arcite was gon
Such sorowe he maketh/ that the great toure
Resowned of his yelling and clamoure
The pure fetters on his shynnes grete
Were of his bytter salte teares Wete
Alas (quod he) Arcite cosyn myne
Of all our strife/ god Wot the fruite is thyne
Thou Walkest nowe in Thebes at large
And of my Wo/ thou recchest lytel charge
Thou maist/ sith thou hast Wysdõe & mãhede
Assemble all the folke of our kynrede
And make werre so sharpe in this countre
That by some aventure/ or by some treate
Thou maist haue her to lady and to Wyfe
For Whom I must nedes lese my lyfe
For as by Way of possibilite
Sithe thou arte at thy large of prison fre
And art a lorde/ great is thyne auauntage
More than is myne/ that sterue here in a rage
For I may Wepe & Waple/ Whiles that I lyue
With all the Wo that prison may me yeue
And eke with payne/ that loue yeueth me also
That doubleth all my tourment & my Wo
Therwith the fyre of ielousy vp sterte
Within his brest/ and hent him by the herte
So wodely/ that he lyke Was to beholde
The bole tree/ or the ashen dede and colde
Than said he. O crueel goddes/ that gouerne
This Worlde With your Worde eterne
And Writen in the table of Athamant
Your parliament and eterne graunt
What is mankynde more vnto you holde
Than is the shepe/ that rouketh in the folde?
For slayne is man/ right as a nother beest
And dwelleth eke in prison/ and in arrest
And hath sickenesse/ and great aduersite
And oft tyme giltelesse parde.
What gouernaunce is in this prescience
That giltelesse tormenteth innocence
And quyteth thus all my penaunce
That may in bounden to his obseruaunce
For goddes sake/ to letten of his Wyll
There as a beest may all his lustes fulfyll
And Whan a beest is dede/ he hath no payn
But after his deth man mote Wepe & playn:
Though in this Worlde he haue care & Wo
Without doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this lete I to diuynes
But Wel I Wote/ in this world grete pyne is
Alas I se a serpent or a theefe
That many a true man hath do mischefe
Goon at his large/ & Wher him list may turne
But I mote ben in prison thrugh Saturne
And eke through Juno/ ialous & eke Wood
That hath almoste slayn all the blood
Of Thebes/ With his wast Walles wyde
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For ielousye/ and feare of him Arcite
Now Wyl I stynte of Palamon a lyte
And let him in his prison stylle dwell
And of Arcite forth Will I you tell.
The somer passeth/ & the nightes longe
Encreseth double Wyse the paines stronge
Both of the louer/ and of the prisoner
I not Which hath the Wofuller mystere
For shortly to saye/ this Palamon
Perpetuelly is dampned to prison
In chaynes and feters to the deed
And Arcite is exiled on his heed
For euermore as out of that countre
Ne neuer more shall his lady se
Now louers axe I now this question
Who hath the Worse/ Arcite or Palamon?
That one may se his lady day by day
But in prison mote he dwell al Way
That other Where him lyst may ryde or go
But sene his lady shall he neuer mo
Now demeth as ye lyst/ ye that can
For I Will tell forthe my tale as I began.

¶ Whan

¶ Whan that Arcite to Thebes comyn was
Full oft a day he ſwalt and ſayd alas
For ſene his lady ſhall he neuer mo
And ſhortly to conclude/ all his wo
So mykell ſore may no wight endure
That is or ſhalbe/ while ȳ world may dure
His ſlepe/ his meate/ his drynke is him byraft
That leane he wayeth/ & dry as a ſhaft
His eyen holowe/ and gryſly to beholde
His hewe pale/ and falowe as aſſhen colde
And ſolitary he was/ and euer alone
And wayling all the nyght/ makyng mone
And if he herde ſonge or inſtrument
Then wolde he wepe/ he myght not ſtynt
So feble were his ſpyrytes/ and ſo lowe
And chaūged ſo/ ȳ no man couthe knowe
His ſpeche ne his voyce/ thoughe men it herde
As nyghtes grete/ for all the worlde it ferde
Nought comly lyke vnto louers maladye
Of Hereos/ but rather lyke manye
Engendred of humours melancolyke
Beſomme his celle fantaſtyke
And ſhortly was turned all vp ſo doun
Bothe habyte and diſpoſicion
Of him/ this wofull louer Arcyte
What ſhulde I all day of his wo endyte?
What he endured had a yere or two
This cruell torment/ & this payne and wo
At Thebes in his countre/ as I ſayde
Vpon a nyght in ſlepe as he him layde
Him thought how ȳ the wynged Mercury
Before him ſtode/ & bade him be mery
His ſlepy yerde in hande he bare vpright
An hatte he wered vpon his heares bright
Arayed was this god/ as he toke kepe
As he was/ whan Argus toke his kepe
And ſaid hi thus: to Athenes ſhalt ȳ wende
There is the ſhapen of thy wo an ende
And with that worde Arcite awoke & ſtert
Now truely how ſore that me ſmerte
Quod he to Athenes right now wol I fare
Ne for no drede of deth ſhall I not fare
To ſe my lady/ that I loue and ſerue
In her preſence recke I not to ſterue
And vp ſtart he/ and forth a gret myrrour
And ſaw how that chaūged was all his colour
And ſaw how his viſage all ye moſter ſtode
And right anon it ran him in his mynde
That ſythe his face was ſo diſfygured
Of maladye/ the whiche he had endured
He myght well/ if that he bare him lowe
Lyue in Athenes euermore vnknowe
And ſeke his lady well nyghe day by day
And right anon he chaunged his aray
And clad him as a poore labourer
And all alone/ ſaue only a ſquyer
That knewe his pryuyte and all his caas
Whiche was diſguyſed poorely as he was
To Athenes is he gon the next way
And to the courte he went vpon a day
And at the gate he proffered his ſeruyce
To dryue & draw/ what ſo me wold deuiſe
And ſhortly of this mater for to ſayne
He fell in office with a chamberlayne
The whiche was dwellyng with Emelye
For he was wyſe/ and ſone couth eſpye
Of euery ſeruaunt/ whiche that ſerued here
Well couthe he hewen wodde/ & water bere
For he was yong and mighty for the nones
And therto he was ſtrong & vygge of bones
To done that any wight can or may deuyſe.
A yere or two he was in this ſeruyſe
Page of the chambre/ of Emely the bryght
And Philoſtrate he ſaid that he hyght.
But halfe ſo well beloued man as he
Ne was there none in court/ of his degre
He was ſo gentyll of condycion
That thrugh al the court was his renoun
They ſayd that it were a charyte
That Theſeus wolde enhaūce his degre
And put him in a worſhyp full ſeruyſe
There as he myght his vertue exerceyſe
And thus with in a whyle his name is ſprongē
Bothe of his dedes/ and of his good tonge
That Theſeus hath taken him ſo nere
That of his chambre he made him squyere
And yaf him golde to mayntayn his degre
And eke men brought him out of his contre
From yere to yere full priuely his rent
But honeſtly and ſtyly he it ſpent
That no man wondred how he it had
And thre yere in this wyſe his lyfe he ladde
And bare him ſo in peace & eke in werre
There was no man that Theſeus hath derre.

¶ And

And in this blysse lete I now Arcyte
And speke I woll of Palamon a lyte.
In derknesse horryble and stronge prison
This seuen yere hath sytten this Palamon
Forpyned/what for wo and distresse
Who feleth double sore and heuynesse
But Palamon: that loue distrayneth so
That wode out of his wit/he gothe for wo
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuell/and not onely for a yere.
Who coude ryme in englysshe properly
His martyrdom: forsoth it am nat I
Therfore I passe as lyghtly as I may.
It befell that in the seuenth yere in May
The thirde nyght/as olde bokes sayne
(That all this storye telleth more playne)
Were it by auenture or by destyne
As whan a thyng is shapen/it shall be
That soon after mydnight/Palamon
By helpyng of a frende brake his prison
And fleeth the cyte/as fast as he may go
For he had yeue his gayler drinke so
Of a clarrey/made of certayn wyne
With narcotyse and opye/of Thebes fyne
That al ye night/thogh men wold hym shake
The gayler slept/he myght nat awake
And thus he fleeth as fast as he may.
The nyght was short/and fast by the day
That nedes cost he mote hym selfe hyde
And to a groue faste there besyde
With dredful foote than stalketh Palamon
For shortly this was his opynyon
That in ye groue he wolde hym hyde all day
And in the nyght then wold he take his way
To Thebes warde/his frendes for to prey
On Theseus to helpe hym to warrey
And shortly/eyther he wolde lese his lyfe
Or wynne Emelye vnto his wyfe
This is the effecte/and his entent playne.
Now woll I torne to Arcite agayne
That lytell wyst how ney was his care
Tyl ye fortune had brought hym in her snare.
The mery larke/messanger of day
Salueth in her songe the morowe gray
And fyry Phebus aryseth vp so bright
That all the orysont laugheth of the lyght
And with his stremes/dryeth in the grene
The syluer dropes/hangyng in the lewes
And Arcite/that in the courte royall
With Theseus his squyer principall
Is ryssen/and loketh on the merry day
And for to don his obseruaunces to May
Remembrynge on the poynt of his desyre
He on his courser/startlyng as the fyre
Is rydden in to the feldes hym to play
Out of the court/were it a myle or tweye
And to the groue/of whiche I you telle
By auenture/his way he gan holde
To maken hym a garlonde of the grenes
Were it of woodbynde/or of hauthorn lewes
And loude he songe ayenst the sonne shene.
May/with all thy flowres and thy grene
Welcom be thou/fayre fresshe May
I hope that I some grene gete may
And from his courser/with a lusty herte
Into the groue full hastily he sterte
And in a path he romed vp and down
There/as by auenture this Palamon
Was in a bussh/that no man myght hym se
For sore aferde of his dethe was he
Nothyng ne knewe he/that it was Arcite
God wote he wolde haue trowed full lyte
But soth is said/go sythen many yeres
That feld hath eyen/and wode hath eres
It is full fayre a man to bere hym euen
For al day meteth men at vnset steuen
Full lytell wote Arcite of his felawe
That was so nyghe to herken of his sawe
For in the busshe sytteth he now ful stylle
Whan that Arcyte had romed all his fyll
And songen all the roundell lustyly
Into a study he fell sodenly
As don these louers in their queynt gyses
Now in the croppe/now doun in ye buryes
Now vp now doun/as bokel in a wel
Right as the fryday/sothly for to tell
Now it rayneth/now it shyneth fast
Right so gan gery Venus ouer cast
The hertes of her folke/right as her day
Is gerysull/right so chaungeth she aray
Selde is the fryday all the wke ylyke
Whan ye Arcite had songe/he gan to syke
And set hym doun/wtouten any more
Alas (quod he) the day that I was bore

How

Howe longe Juno thorugh thy cruelte
Wylt thou werreye Thebes the cite?
Alas ywrought is to confusyon
The blode ryall of Cadmus & Amphyon
Of Cadmus / Whiche Was the first man
That Thebes buylt / or fyrst the town began
And of the cyte fyrst was croWned kyng
Of his lynage am I / and of his offspring
By very lyne / as of the stocke ryall
And nowe I am so captyfe and so thrall
That he that is my mortall enemy
I serue hym / as his squyre poorly
And yet dothe me Juno Well more shame
For I dare not be knoWe myn owne name
But there as I Was Wont to hyght Arcyte
NoW hyght I Philostrat not Worth a myte
Alas thou fell Mars / alas thou Juno
Thus hath your yre our lynage all fordo
Saue only me / and Wretched Palamon
That Theseus martyreth in prison
And ouer all this / to sloo me bitterly
Loue hath his fyry darte so brennyngly
I stycked thorugh my true carefull herte
That shapen Was my deth erst myn herte
Ye slee me With your eyen Lucyne
Ye Wen the rouse Wherfore I dye
Of all the remenaunt of myn other care
Ne set I not the mountaunce of a tare
So I yow mote do ought to your plesaunce
And Wyth I Wolde he fell do myn ordynaunce
A longe tyme / and after Wardi he up first
This Palamon thought I thrugh his herte
He felte a colde swerde sodenly glyde
For ire he quoke / no longer Wolde he abyde
And Whan that he had harde Arcytes tale
As he Were Wood / Wyth face dead and pale
He sterte hym up / out of the bussshes thycke
And said: Arcyte false traytour Wycke
NoWe art thou hent / that louest my lady so
For Whom that I haue this payne and Wo
And art my bloode / & to my counsell sWorn
As I haue full ofte tolde the here beforn
And hast be nayed here duke Theseus
And falsly hast chaunged thy name thus
I Wyll be dead / or els thou shalt dye
Thou shalt not louen my lady Emelye
But I Will loue her only I and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortall foe
Though I haue no Weapen in this place
But out of prison am astert by grace
I drede not / that eyther thou shalt dye
Or thou ne shalt not louen Emelye
Chese Which thou Wilt / or I shall not astert
This Arcite / Wyth full despytous hert
Whan he hym knewe / & had his tale herde
As fers as a lyon / pulled out his sWerde
And sayd: By god that sytteth aboue
Ne Were it I thou art sick / & Wood for loue
And eke I thou no Wepen hast in this place
Thou shuldest neuer out of this grene pace
That thou ne shuldest dyen of myn honde
For I defye the enterete & the bonde
Whiche I thou sayst I haue made to the
What fery fole / thynke Wel that loue is fre
And I Wyl loue her maugre all thy myght
But for as moche as thou arte a knyght
And Wylnest to darrayne here by batayle
Haue here my trouth / to morow I Wyl not
Without Wetyng of any other wight (fayle
That here I Wyll be founden as a knyght
And hunger harneys / right ynough for the
And chese the best / & leaue the Worst for me.
And meate & drynke / this nyght Wyl I bring
Ynough for the / & clothes for thy bedding
And if so be that thou my lady Wyn
And slee me in this Wodde ther I am in
Thou mayst Wel haue thy lady as for me.
This Palamon answerde: I graunt it the
And thus they ben departed tyll a morow
Whan eche of hem had layd his payn to borow
CD Luyde out of all charyte
D regne / I Wolde I haue no felowe W^t the
Full sothe is sayd / that loue ne lordshyp
Wyll nat his thewes haue any felyshyp
Ye fynde that of Arcite and of Palamon
Arcyte is ryden anon in to the toun
And on the morow or it Were day lyght
Full pryuely two harneys hath he dyght
Bothe sufficient and mete to darreyne
The batayle in ^a felde betWyxe hem tweyne
And on his horse / a lous as he Was borne
He carpeth all his harneys hym beforne
And in the grene / at tyme and place yfette
Thus Arcyte & this Palamon ben mette

To

To chaungen gan the colour in her face
Ryght as the hunter/ in ỳ regne of Trace
That standeth at a gappe With a speare
Whan hunted is the lyon or the beare
And heareth him russhyng in the leaues
And breaketh the bowes in the greues
And thinketh/ here cometh my mortal enemy
Without fayle/ he must be dead or I
For either I mote slee hym at the gappe
Or he mote slee me/ if me mishappe
So ferden they/ in chaungyng of her hewe
As farre as euerych of other knewe
There nas no good day/ ne no salutyng
But streyght/ Without worde or rehersyng
Euerych of hem helpeth for to arme other
As frendly/ as he were his owne brother
And after that/ with sharpe speares stronge
They foynen eche at other wonder longe
Thou myghtest wene/ that this Palamon
In his fyghtyng/ were a wode lyon
And as a cruell tygre Was Arcyte
As wylde boores gan they fyght & smyte
That frothen whyte as fome for yre Woode
Up to the ancle foughten they in her Bloode
And in this Wise/ I let hem fightyng dWell
And forthe I Will of Theseus you tell.

The destenye and the mynister generall
That executeth in the Worlde ouer all
The purueyaunce/ ỳ god hath sayd byforne
So strōg it is/ ỳ though ỳ world had sWorn
The contrary of thyng by ye or nay
Yet somtyme it shall fall on a day
That fell neuer yet in a thousande yere
For certaynly our appetytes here
Be it of warre/ peace/ hate/ or loue
All is ruled by the syght aboue.
This meane I noWe by mighty Theseus
That for to hunte is so desyrous
And namely at the great harte in May
That in his bed there daWeth him no day
That he nys clad/ and redy for to ryde
With hunt & horne/ & houndes hym besyde
For in his huntyng hath he suche delyte
That it is all his ioye and appetyte
To bey him selfe the great hartes bane
For after Mars/ he serueth noWe Dyane
Clere Was the day/ as I haue tolde or this
And Theseus/ with all ioye and blys
With his Ipolita/ the fayre queene
And Emely/ yclothed all in greene
On huntyng bey they rydden royally.
And to the groue/ that stode there fast by
In which ther was an harte/ as me him told
Duke Theseus the streyght Way hath hold
And to the launde/ he rydeth him full rygte
For thyder was ỳ hart wont to haue his flyght
And ouer a broke/ & so forthe on his wey
This duke Woll haue a course at him or tWey
With houndes/ suche as him lyst comaunde
And Whan ỳ duke Was comen vnto ỳ launde
Vnder the sonne he loked/ and that anon
He Was ware of Arcyte and Palamon
That fought breme/ as it were bulles tWo
The bright sWordes wenten to and fro
So hydously/ that With the lest strook
It semed/ that it Wolde haue fellen an ok
But What they Were/ nothyng he ne Wote
This duke Wt his spere/ his courser smote
And at a sterte he Was betWyxt hem tWo
And pulled out his sWorde/ and cryed/ ho
Nomore/ on payne of lesyng of your heed
By mighty Mars/ he shall anon be deed
That smyteth any stroke/ that I may see
But telleth me/ what myster men ye bey
That bey so hardy for to fyghten here
Without iuge/ or other offycere
As though it were in lystes rially.
This Palamon answerde hastely
And sayd: syr/ What nedeth Worde mo?
We haue the dethe deserued bothe tWo
Two Wofull Wretches bey we & caytiues
That bey encombred of our owne liues
And as thou arte a rygtfull lorde & iuge
Ne yeue vs neyther mercy ne refuge
But slee me first/ for saynte charite
But slee my felowe as Well as me
Or slee him first / for though ỳ knowest it lite
This is thy mortall foe/ this is Arcite
That fro thy lande is banysshed on his heed
For Which he hath deserued to be deed
For this is he/ that came vnto thy gate
And sayd/ that he hight Philostrate
Thus hath he japed full many a yere
And thou hast made hym thy chefe squyere.

And

And this is he/that loueth Emely.
For fythe the day is come that I shall dye
I make playnly my confessyon
I am thylke Wofull Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wykkedly
I am thy mortall foe/and he am I
That loueth so hotte Emelye the bryght
That I wold dye here present in her syght
Wherfore I aske dethe and my iewyse
But slee my felowe in the same wyse
For bothe we haue deserued to be slayn.
This worthy duke answerde anon agayn
And sayd/this is a shorte conclusyon
Your owne mouthe/by your confessyon
Hath dampned you/and I will it recorde
It nedeth not to pyne you with a corde
Ye shall be deed by mygthy Mars the rede
The quene anone/for very womanheed
Gan for to Wepe/and so dyd Emelye
And all the ladyes in the companye
Great pyte was it/as thdught hem all
That euer suche a chaunce shulde befall
For gentylmen they were of great estate
And nothyng but for loue Was this debate
And sawe her blody wounden Wyde & sore
And all cryden bothe lesse and more
Haue mercy lorde vpon vs wymmen all
And on her bare knees dOwne they fall
And Wolde haue kyst his fete there he stode
Tyll at the last/ a slaked was his mode
For pyte renneth soone in gentyl herte
And though he first for yre quoke & sterte
He hath consydered shortly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe/ & eke the cause
And al though his ire her gylt accused
Yet in his reason he hem bothe excused
As thus: he thought Well that euery man
Wyll helpe hym self in loue all that he can
And eke deliuer hymselfe out of prison
And eke his herte had compassyon
Of Wymen/for they Wepen euery one
And in his gentyl herte he thought anone
And softe vnto hymselfe he sayd: fy
Vpon a lorde that Will haue no mercy
But be a lyon/bothe in Worde and dede
To hem that ben in repentaunce & in drede
As Well as to a proude dispytous man
That Wyll mayntayne that he first began.
That lorde hath gylt of discretyon
That in suche case can no dyfference
But Wayteth pryde and humblesse after one
And [illegible] his ire was thus agone
He gan to loken vp with eyen lyght
And spake these Wordes all on hyght.
The god of loue/ah/ benedicite
HOWe mighty/& hOWe great a lorde is he
Agayn his might ther gayneth no obstacles
He may be cleaped a god for his myracles
For he can make at his owne gyse
Of euerych hert/as hym lyst deuyse
Lo here this Arcyte/and this Palamon
That quytely were out of my prison gon
And myght haue lyued in Thebes royally
And wyst no Wyght I am her mortall enemy
And that her dethe is in my pOWer also
And yet hath loue/maugre her eyen tWo
Broughte hem hyther bothe for to dye
Now wote [illegible] is not this a great folye?
Who may be a fole/but if he loue?
Beholde for goddes sake/that syttyth aboue
Se hOWe they blede/be they not wel arayde
Thus hath her lord/ the god of loue hem payd
Her wages/& her fees for her seruyse
And yet they wenen to be full wyse
That serue loue/for aught that may be fall
But yet is this the best game of all
That she/ for whom they haue this iolyte
Can hem therfore/ as moche thanke as me
She wotte nomore of all this hote fare
By god/than wotte a cOkOWe or an hare
But all mote ben assayed hote & colde
A man mote ben a fOOle other yong or olde
I wote it by my selfe full yore agone
For my tyme/a seruaunte was I one
And therfore syth I knOWe of loues payne
I wote hOWe sore it can a man distrayne
As he that ofte hath ben caught in her lace
I pray you forgeue all freely this trespace
At the requeste of the quene/ that sueth here
And eke of Emely/my syster dere
And ye shall bysye anon vnto me swere
That ye shall neuer more my countree dere
Ne make warre vpon me nyght ne day
But ben my frendes in all that ye may
I you

I you forgeue thiu trespas euery dele
And they him swore his asking fair & wele
And him of lordshyp & of mercy prayde
And he hem grauted grace/ & thus he sayde.

To speake of worthy lynage & eyhe
Though ỳ she were a quene/ or a princesse
Eche of you bothe is worthy doutles
To Wedde whan tyme is/ but nathelesse
I speke/ as for my syster Emely
For whom ye haue this stryfe & ielousy
Ye Wote your selfe/ she may not wedde two
At ones/ though ye spyghten euer mo
But one of you/ all be hym lothe or lefe
He mote go pype in an yue lefe
This is to say/ she may not haue bothe
Ne hem ye neuer so ielous/ ne so wrothe
And therfore/ I you put in this degre
That eche of you shall haue his destyne
As hym is shape/ and herken in What wyse
Lo here your ende/ of that I shall deuyse.
Wy Wyll is this/ for plat conclusyon
Without any replycation
If that you lyketh/ taketh it for the best
That euerich of you shall go where him lest
Freely/ Without raunsome or daungere
And this day fyfty Wekes / ferre ne nere
Euerich of you shall bring an .C. knyghtes
Armed for the lystes vp all rightes
All redy to darreyne here by batayle
And this behote I you Withouten fayle
Upon my trouthe /as I am true knyght
That Wheder of you both/ hath that myght
That is to say / that Wheder he or thou
May With his hidere/ as I spake of nowe
Slee his contrary / or out of lystes dryue
Hym shall I yeue Emely to Wyue
To whom ỳ fortune yeueth so faire a grace
The lystes shall I maken in this place
And god so Wisely on my soule rewe
As I shall euyn iuge be and trewe
Ye shall non other ende With me make
That one of you shalbe dede or take
And if ye thynken/ thes is Well ysaid
Saith your aunte/ & holde you Well apayde
This is your ende/ and your conclusyon.
Who fareth lightly now but Palamon?
Who springeth vp for ioye but Arcite?
Who coude tell/ or Who coude endite?
The ioye that is made in this place
Whan Theseus had don so fayre a grace
But doun on knees wel euery maner knyght
And thanked hym/ Withall her hert & myght
And namely these Thebans many sithe
And thus With good hope and hert vplythe
They take her leue/ & hom ward gan they ryde
To Thebes warde/ with olde walles wyde
I trowe men Wolde deme it negligence
yf I forgetten to tell the dispence
Of Theseus/ that goethe so busely
To maken vp the lystes royally
That suche a noble Theatre/ as it Was
I dare Well say / in this Worlde there nas
The circute a myle Was about
Walled With stone/ and dyched all about
Rounde was the shape/ in maner of a compas
Full of degrees/ the height of sixty paas
That Whan a man Was set on one degre
He letted nat his felowe for to se
Estward there stode a gate of marble White
Westwarde right suche another i thopposite
And shortly to conclude/ suche a place
Was non in erthe/ as in so lytell space
For in the londe/ there nas no crafty man
That geometry/ or arsmetike can
Ne portrayture/ ne caruers of ymages
That Theseus ne gaue hym mete & Wages
The theatre for to make and deuyse.
And for to do his rite and sacrifice
He estWarde hath vpon the gate above
In Worship of Venus/ goddes of loue
Do make an autre / and an oratory
And on the Westyde/ in memory
Of Mars/ he hath maked suche another
That cost of golde largely a fother
And northWarde/ in a turret on the Wall
Of alabastre White/ and rede coral
An oratory/ ryche for to se
In Worship of Diane/ goddes of chastite
Hath Theseus don Wrought in noble wyse.
But yet had I forgotten to deuyse
The noble carueynges and the portreatures
The shap/ the countenaunce/ & the figures
That Were in the oratories thre

First

First in the temple of Venus thou mayst se
Wrought on the wall/ful pitously to beholde
The broken slepes/and the sykes colde
The sauste teares/and the Waymentyng
The fyre strokes/and the desyryng
That loues seruantes in this lyfe endure
The othes/that her couenauntes assure
Pleasaunce & hope/desyre/foolehardynesse
Beauty and youthe/bawdry and rychesse
Charmes and sorcery/leasynges & flatterye
Dispense/busynesse/and ielousye
That Wered of yelowe golden a garlonde
And a cokowe sytting on her honde.
Festes/instrumentes/carolles/& daunces
Iustes and aray/and all the circumstaūces
Of loue/Whiche I reken and reken shall
By ordre / Were paynted on the Wall
And mo than I can make of mencyon
For sothly all the mounte of Cytheron
Where Venus hath her principall dwellyng
Was shewed on the wall in portrayenge
With all the ioye/and the lusty nesse
Nought was forgeten the porte nesse pleasaunce
Ne Narcisse the fayre of yore agon
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salomon
Ne yet the great strength of Hercules
Thenchauntement of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus/ with his hardy spere corage
The ryche Cresus captyf in seruage
Thus may ye se/that wysedom ne rychesse
Beaute ne sleyght/strength ne hardynesse
Ne may With Venus holde champartye
For as her lyst the Worlde may she gye
Lo/all these folke so caught Were in her las
Ye/ll they for Wo full ofte sayd alas
Suffyseth here one ensample or Two
And thoughe I coude reken a thousande mo
The statue of Venus glorious to se
Was naked fletyng in the large se
And fro the nauyll doWne all couered Was
With Waves grene/& bright as any glas
A cytole in her ryght honde had she
And on her hed/full semely for to se
A rose garlande/fressh and well smellyng
Above her hed doues flyttrynge
Before her stode her sonne Cupido
Upon his shoulders Wynges had he two
And blynde he Was/as it is ofte sene
A bowe he had/& arowes Were bright and kene
Why shulde I not as Well tellen all
The purgatory that was ther about ouer all
Within the temple of mighty Mars the rede:
All paynted Was the Wall in length & brede
Lyke to the estres of the grysly place
That hyght ye gret temple of Mars in Trace
In thylke colde frosty regyon
Ther Mars hath his soueraygne mansyon
First on the wall was paynted a forest
In whiche ther wonneth nother man ne best
With knotty and knarry trees olde
Of stubbes sharpe/and hydous to beholde
In whiche there Was a romble & a stir Wo^e
As though a storme shulde breke euery tre Wo^e
And downe Ward vnder an hyll vnder a bent
Ther stode the temple of Mars armypotent
Wrought al of burned stele/of Which thentre
Was longe and streyght/ & gastly for to se
And therout came suche a rage & suche a vyse
That it made all the gates for to ryse
The northern lyght in at the dores shone
For Wyndo We on the Wall Was there none
Through Which men might any lyght discerne
The dores Were all of athamant eterne
Yclenched ouerthwart and endelonge
With yren tough/for to make it stronge
Euery pyller the temple to sustene
Was tonne great/of yren bright and shene
There saWe I first the derke ymagynyng
Of felony/and eke the compassyng:
The cruell yre/redde as any glede
The pykepurse/and eke the pale drede
The smyler/With the knyfe vnder the cloke
The shepen brennyng with the blacke smoke
The treason of the murdrynge in the bedde
The open Warre/with woundes all be bledde
Conteke with bloody knyues/ & sharpe manace
All full of chirkyng Was that sory place
The slayer of hym selfe yet saWe I there
His herte blood hath bathed all his here
The nayle ydryven in the shode on hyght
With colde deth/ With mouth gapyng vpright
Amyddes of the temple sate Mischaunce
With Discomfort/and sory Contenaunce
yet saWe I Woodnesse/laughyng in his rage

Armed complaynte on theyr ſtyffe courage
The carrayne in the buſſhe/ wᵗ throte yeorne
A thouſande ſlayne/ & nat of qualme yſtorne
The tyraunt/ With the pray by force yraft
The to Wy deſtroyed/ther Was nothyng ylaft
yet ſaWe I beeut the ſhyppes hoppeſteres
The hũter yſtrangled With ỳ Wylde beares
The fowe fretting the chylde in the cradyll
The cobe yſcaulded/ for al his longe ladyll
Naught Was forbeten ỳ unfortune of Marte
The carter ouer rydden by his owne carte
Vnder the wheles full lowe he lape a doWn
There Were alſo of Martes diuyſyon
The barbour/ the boucher/ and the ſmyth
That forgeth ſharpe ſWordes on the ſtyth
And all aboute depaynted in a toure
Sawe I Cõqueſt/ ſytting in great honoure
With the ſharpe ſWorde ouer his heed
Hangyng by a ſubtyll twynned threde
Depaynted Was ther/ ỳ ſlaughter of Julius
Of great Nero/ and of Anthonius
Al be that thylke tyme they Were vnborne
yet Was her dethe depaynted there beforne
By manacyng of Mars/ right by fygure
So Was it ſheWed in that portreture
As is depaynted in the cercles aboute
Whõ ſhall be deed or elꝭ ſlayne for loue
Suffyſeth one enſample in ſtoryes olde
I may not reken them al/ though I Wolde
The ſtatue of Marte vpon a carte ſtode
Armed/ and loked grym as he Were Wode
And ouer his heed there ſhyneth two fygures
Of ſterres/ that ben cleped in ſcryptures
That one (Puella) hight/ ỳ other (Rubeus)
This god of armes Was arayed thus
A Wolfe there ſtode beforne him at his fete
With eyen redde/ and of a man he ete
With ſubtyll penſyll Was paynted this ſtory
In redoutyng of Marte and of his glory.

Nowe to the temple of Dyane the chaſte
As ſhortly as I can I Wyll me haſte
To tell you al the deſcripcyon
Depaynted ben the walles vp and doun
Of huntyng and of ſtandard chaſtyte
There ſaWe I how Wofull Calyſtope
When that Dyane greued Was With her
Was turned fro a Woman to a bere
And after warde Was ſhe made the lode ſterre
Thus Was it paynted/ I can ſay no ferre
Her ſonne is eke a ſterre/ as many may ſe
There ſaWe I Dane turned vnto a tre
I meane nat the goddeſſe Dyane
But Penus doughter/ Whiche ỳ hyght Dane
There ſaWe I Athemas the ſcrite ymaked
For Vengeaunce ỳ he ſaWe Dyane al naked
I ſaWe how ỳ his houndes han him caught
And freten him/ for they knewe him nought
Yet ypaynted Was a fyrſte forthermore
How Athalant hunted the Wylde bore
And Meleager/ and many other mo
For Whiche Dyane Wrought him care & Wo
There ſaWe I many a nother Wonder ſtory
Whiche me lyſt not to dite We in memory
This goddeſſe ſtil Wel by an harte ſhe ſate
With ſmale houndes al aboute her fete
And vnderneth her fete/ ſhe had a moone
Which Waxe & Wane Was/ and ſhulde Wane ſoone
In gaudy grene/ her ſtatue clothed Was
With bowe in hande/ and arowes in a caas
Her eyen caſt ſhe ful lowe adoWn
There Pluto hath his darke regioun
A Woman trauelyng Was her beforne
But for her childe/ ſo longe Was vnborne
Full pytouſly Lucyna gan ſhe call
And ſayd helpe/ for thou mayſt beſt of all
Well coude he paynte lyuely that it Wrought
With many a floryn he the heWes bought.

Nowe ben theſe lyſtes made/ and Theſeus
That at his great coſt hath arayed thus
The temples/ and the theatre euerydell
Whan it Was done/ it liked him Wonder Wel.
But ſtynte I Woll of Theſeus alyte
And ſpeke of Palamon and of Arcyte
The day approcheth of her retournyng
That euerych ſhuld an hundred knyghtes bring
The bataple to darreyne/ as I you tolde
And to Athenes/ her couenantes to holde
Hath euerych of hem brought an .C. knyghtes
Well armed for the warre/ at al ryghtes
And ſurely/ there trowed many a man
That neuer ſythnes the Worlde began
As for to ſpeke of Strengthe/ of hertes bonde
As farre as god hath made ſea or londe

Nas

Was of so fewe so noble a company
For every wight that lowed chyualry
And wolde fayn haue a passyng name
Hath prayed that he myght be of that game
And wel was hym that therto chosen was
For if there fel to morow we suche a cace
Ye thynke wel that every lusty knyght
That loueth paramours / & hath his myght
Were it in Englonde / or ellis where
They wolde fayne wyllyng to be there
To fyght for a lady / as I you deuyse
It were a lusty syght for to se
And right so farken they with Palamon
With fyfty there went knyghtes many one
Some wolde ben armed in an habergeon
And in a brest plate / and a gypser gypon
And some wolde haue a peyre of plates large
And some wolde haue a pruce sheld or a targe
Some wolde be armed on his legges wele
And haue an axe / & some a mace of stele
There nas noo newe guyse / that it nas olde
Armed were they / as I haue you tolde
Eueryche after his opinyon
¶ Thermayst thou se comyng w^t Palamon
Lygurge hym self / the great kyng of Trace
Blacke was his berde / & manly was his face
The sercles of his eyen in his hed
They glouden bytwyxte yelowe and red
And lyke a lyon lobed he aboute
With lymmes great / & brode bones stoute
His sturdy armes / his brawnes stronge
His shoulders brode / his armes rounde & longe
And as the gyse was in his countre
Full hye vpon a charre of golde stode he
With foure whyte bulles in the trays
In stede of a cote armure / ouer his harnays
With nayles yelowe / & bryght as any golde
He hath a beares skyn / cole blacke for olde
His longe heare was kempt behynd his backe
As any rauens fether it shone for blacke
A wrethe of golde arme gret / of huge weyght
Vpon his hed / set full of stones bryght
Of fyne rubyes and of dyamandes
Aboute his charre there went whyte alaundes
Twenty and mo / as great as any steere
To hunten at the lyon / or at the wylde deere
And folowed hym / with mosel faste ybounde
Colleres of golde / and torettes fyled rounde
An hundred lordes had he in his route
Armed ful wel / with hertes sterne & stoute

With Arcyte / thorgh floures & myn ful fyne
The great Emetreus the kyng of Inde
Vpon a stede bay / trapped in stele
Couered with a cloth of golde dyapred wele
Came rydyng / lyke the god of armes Mars
His cote armure was of cloth of Tars
Couched with perle / whyte / rounde & great
His sadell was of burnt golde newe ybete
A mantel vpon his shulders hangyng
Bretful of rubyes / red as fyre sparklyng
His crysp heare lyke rynges was yronne
And ye was yelowe / & glytteryng as the sonne
His nose was hye / his eyen bryght citryn
His lyppes rudy / his colour was sanguyn
A fewe freknes in his face ysprynkt
Bet wyxt yelowe / & somdele blacke ymyxt
And as a lyon he his eyen caste
Of fyue and twenty yere his age I caste
His berde was wel begonne for to spryng
His voyce was as a trompet sowryng
Vpon his hed he wered of laurer grene
A garlande fresshe and lusty for to sene
Vpon his honde he bare for his desyte
An egle tame / as any lylly whyte
An hundred lordes had he with hym there
All armed saue hed in her gere
Full ryche of al maner thinges
For trusteth wel / that erles / dukes / & kynges
Were gathered in this noble compayne
For loue / and for encrease of chyualrye
Aboute this kyng there ran on euery parte
Ful many a tame lyon and lybarde
And in this wyse / these lordes al & some
Ben on the sonday to the cyte come
Aboute prime / and in the toune alyght
¶ This Theseus / this duke / this worthy knyght
Whan he had brought hem in to his cyte
And inned hem / euerych after his degre
He festeth hem / and doth so great labour
To ease hem / and don hem al honour
That yet men weny that no mannes wyt
Of none estate couthe amende it
The mynstralcye / the seruyce at the feste

The great yeftes to the moſte and leſt
The riche array/throughout Theſeus paleys
Ne who ſate firſt ne laſte vpon the deys
What ladyes fayreſt ben or beſt daunceyng
Or whiche of hem can beſt daunce or ſyng
Ne who moſte felyngly ſpeketh of loue
Ne what haukes ſytten on the perches aboue
Ne what houndes ſtanden on the flour adoun
Of al this nowe make I no mencioun
But al the effecte/that thynketh me the beſte
Now cometh the poynt/herkeneth if you leſte

The ſoday at nightes/or day began to ſpringe
Whan Palamon the larke herde ſynge
Al though it were nat day by houres two
Yet ſonge the larke/& Palamon right tho
With holy herte/and with an hye corage
He roſe vp/to wenden on his pylgrimage
Vnto the blyſful Cytherea benygne
I meane Venus/honorable and dygne
And in her hour/he walketh forth a paas
Vnto the lyſtes/there the temple was
And doune he kneleth/& with humble chere
And herte ſore/he ſayd as ye ſhal here.
Fayreſt of fayre: O lady myn Venus
Doughter of Ioue/and ſpouſe to Vulcanus
Thou glader of the mounte of Cytheron
For thylke loue thou haddeſt to Adon
Haue pyte of my bytter teares ſmerte
And take my humble prayer at thyn herte
Alas/I ne haue no langage to tell
The effectes ne the tourment of myne hel
Myne herte may nat myne harmes bewaip
I am ſo confuſed that I can nat ſay
But mercy lady bright that woſte wele
My thought/ and ſeeſt what harmes that I fele
Conſydre al this/ and rewe vpon my ſore
As wyſely as I ſhal for euermore
Emforth my might thy trewe ſeruaunt to be
And holde warre alwaye with chaſtyte
That make I myne auowe ſo ye me helpe
I kepe nat of armes for to yelpe
Ne I ne aſke to morowe to haue victory
Ne renoumme in this caſe ne vayne glory
Of pruſe of armes to blowen vp and downe
But wolde haue fully poſſeſſyoun
Of Emely/ and dye in her ſeruyce
Fynde thou the maner howe/ in what wyſe
I recche nat/ but it mayne better be
To haue victory of hem or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myne armes
For though ſo be that Mars is god of armes
Your vertue is ſo great in heuen aboue
That if you lyſte I ſhal wel haue my loue
Thy temple ſhal I worſhippe euermo
And on thyne auter where I ryde or go
I wol done ſacrifyce and fyres bete
And if ye wol nat ſo my lady ſwete
Than pray I you/ to morowe with a ſpere
That Arcyte me thrugh the herte bere
Than recke I nat whan I haue loſt my lyfe
Though Arcyte wynne her to wyfe
This is the effecte and ende of my prayere
Yeue me my lady thou blyſful lady dere
Whan the oriſon was done of Palamon
His ſacrifyce he dyde and that anon
Ful pitouſly with al circumſtaunces
Al tel I nat as nowe his obſeruaunces.
But at the laſt the ſtatue of Venus ſhoke
And made a ſigne/ wherby that he toke
That his prayere accepted was that day
For though the ſigne ſhewed a delay
Yet wyſt he wel that graunted was his bone
And with glad herte he went him hom ful ſone

The thirde houre in equal that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to goone
Vp roſe the ſonne and vp roſe Emely
And vnto the temple of Diane gan hye
Her maydens/ the whiche thider were ladde
Ful redely with hem the fyre they hadde
The enſence/ the clothes/ & the remenaunt al
That to the ſacrifyce longen ſhal
The hornes ful of meeth as was the gyſe
There lacked nought to done her ſacrifyce
Smoſyng the temple ful of clothes faire
This Emely with herte debonaire
Her body waſſhe with water of a well
But how ſhe dyde right I dare nat tel
But it be any thyng in general
And yet it were a game to herken al
To him that meaneth wel it were no charge
But it is good a man be at his large
Her bright heer was vnbrayde & vntreſſed al

Acroſſe

A roo wne of a greue ofte buſeryall
Vpon her herd ſet ful ſayre and mete
Two ſpres on the oulter gay ſhe bete
And dyd her thynges/as men may beholde
In Stace of Thebes/ and theſe bookes olde
Whan kendled was the fyre/wt pitous chere
Vnto Dyane ſhe ſpake as ye may here.
¶ O chaſte goddeſſe of the Wodes greue
To Whom both heuen & erthe and ſee is leue
Quene of the regyne of Pluto/derke & lo We
Goddeſſe of maydes/ þ myn hert hath knoWe
Ful many a yere/and Woſte What I deſyre
As kepe me fro the Vengeaunce of thyn yre
That Acteon abought cruelly
Chaſte goddeſſe/Wel Woſte thou that I
Deſyre to ben a maydе al my lyfe
Ne neuer wol I be louer ne wyfe
I am thou (Woſte Wel) of thy company
A maydе/and loue huntyng and Venery
And for to Walken in the Wodes wyde
And not for to ben a Wyf/ & ben with chylde
Nought Wyl I knoWe companye of man
Noo We helpe me lady ſythe ye may and can
For tho thre formes that thou haſte in the
And Palamon/ þ hath ſuche a loue to me
And eke Arcite/that loueth me ſo ſore
This grace I pray the/withouten more
And ſende loue and peace betWyxt hem tWo
And fro me turne away her hertes ſo
That al her hotte loue/and her deſyre
And al her buſy turment/and al her fyre
Be queynt/or turned in an other place
And if ſo be thou Woltе not do me that grâce
Or if ſo be my deſtony be ſhapen ſo
That I ſhal nedes haue one of hem tWo
As ſende me hym that moſte deſyreth me
Beholde goddeſſe of clene chaſtyte
The bytter teares/that on my chekes fall
Syn thou arte a maydе/and kepere of vs all
My maydenhede thou kepe/& Wel conſerue
And Whyle I lyue/a maydеn Wol I þ ſerue.
¶ The fyres brenne Vpon the auter clere
Whyle Emely was thus in her preyere
But ſodenly ſhe ſaWe a thyng queynte
For right anon/one of the fyres queynte
And quyked agayn/and after that anon
That other fyre Was queynte/ and al agon
And as it queynte it made a Whyſtlyng
As doth theſe Wete brondes in her brennyng
And at the brondes ende/out ran anone
As it were bloddy droppes many one
For Whiche ſo ſore agaſte was Emelye
That ſhe was Wel nye madde/& gan to crye
For ſhe ne Wyſte What it ſignyfyed
But onely for the feare thus ſhe cryed.
And wepte/that it was pyte for to here
And therWithal Dyane gan to apere
Vith boWe in honde/ right as an huntereſſe
And ſayd doughter/ſtynte thyn heuyneſſe
Amonge the goddes hye it is affyrmed
And by eterne Worde/Written & confyrmed
Thou ſhalt ben Wedded to one of tho
That haue for the ſo moche care and Wo
But Vnto Whiche of hem I may not tell
FarWell/for I may no lenger dWell
The fyres/Whiche on myn auter brenne
Shal declaren/er that thou gon henne
Thin auenture of loue/as in this caſe
And With that Worde/ the aroWes in þ caſe
Of the goddeſſe/clateren faſte and ryng
And forthe ſhe Went/and made Vaneſhyng
For Whiche this Emelye aſtonyed Was
And ſayd:what mounteth this/alas
I put me Vnder thy protection
Dyane/and Vnder thy diſpoſycion
And home ſhe gothe the next Way
This is the effecte/there is no more to ſay.

The next houre of Mars folo Wyng this
Arcite Vnto the temple walked is
Of fyers Mars/to done his ſacryfyſe
Vith al the myght of his paynem wyſe
Vith pytous herte/and hye deuocion
Right thus to Mars he ſayd his oryſon.
¶ O ſtronge god/that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured arte/and lorde yholde
And haſte in euery regne and euery londe
Of armes/al the brydle in thyn honde
And hem fortuneſt/an the lyſte deuyſe
Accepte of me my pyteous ſacryfyce
If ſo be my thought may deſerue
And that my myght be worthy for to ſerue
Thy godhede/that I may ben one of thyne
Than pray I the/that thou rue on my pyne

For thylke payne/and thylke hotte fyre
In whiche thou brenteſt whylom for deſyre
Whan thou wedeſt the fayre beaute
Of fayre yonge freſſhe Venus fre
And haddeſt her in thyn armes/at thy wyll
Al though thou ones on a tyme muſſyll
Whan Vulcanus had caught the in his laas
And founde the lyggyng by his wyfe alas
For thylke ſorowe/that was in thyn herte
Haue ruthe as wel on my paynes ſmerte
I am yonge and vncõnyng / as thou woſt
And as I trowe/with loue offended moſte
That euer was any lyues creature
For ſhe that dothe me al this wo endure
Ne retcheth neuer/where I ſynke or flete
And wel I wote/or ſhe me mercy hete
I mote with ſtrength wynne her in this place
And wel I wote/without helpe or grace
Of the/ ne may my ſtrength not auayle
Thã helpe me lorde to morowe vn my batayle
For thylke fyre/that whylom brent the
As wel as the fyre nowe brenneth me
And do/that I to morowe haue the victory
Myn be the trauayle/ and thyn be the glory
Thy ſouerayne tẽple wol I moſt honouren
Of any place/and alway moſte labouren
In thy pleſaunce/and in thy craftes ſtronge
And in thy temple/ I wol my baner honge
And al the armés of my compayne
And euermore/vntyl the day I dye
Eterne fyre I wol before the fynde
And rue to this auowe I wol me bynde
My herde/my heare/ ꝑ hongeth lowe adoun
That neuer yet felte offenſyõn
Of raſour ne of ſheere/I wol the yeue
And bey thy true ſeruaunt whyle I lyue
Now lorde haue ruthe vpon my ſorowes ſore
Yeue me the victory/ I aſke the nomore.
¶ The prayer of Arcite the ſtronge
The rynges on the temple dore they ronge
And eke the doores clatren ful faſte
Of whiche Arcite ſore agaſte.
The fyres brenneth vpon the auter bryght
That it gan al the tẽple lyght
A ſwete ſmell anon the grounde vp caſte
And Arcita anon his honde vp haſte
And more encenſe in to the fyre he caſte
With other rytes mo/and at the laſte
The ſtatu of Mars began his hauberke ryng
And with that ſounde he herde a murmuring
Ful lowe and dyn/ that ſayd thus: Victory
For whiche he yaſe to Mars honour & glory
And thus with ioye/& hope wel to fare
Arcite anon vn to his inne is fare
As fayne as foule is of the bryght ſonne
And right anon/ ſuche a ſtryfe is vpgonne
For thylke graunting/in the heuen above
Betwyxt Venus/the goddeſſe of loue
And Mars the ſterne god armypotent
That Jupiter was buſy it to ſtynte
Tyl that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knewe ſo many auentures olde
Founde in his eyperyence and arte
That he ful ſone hath pleeſed euery parte
And ſothe is ſayd/elde hath great auãtage
In elde is bothe wyſdom and vſage
Men may the olde out renne/ but not out rede
Saturne anon/to ſtynten ſtryfe & drede
Al be it that it be agayne his lyſte
Of al this ſtryfe he can remedye ſyndē
¶ My derre doughter Venus/quod Saturne
My courſe that hath ſo wyde for to turne
Hath more power than wote any man
Myn is the drenchyng in the ſee ſo wan
Myn is the priſon in the derke cote
Myn is ꝑ ſtrãgling & the hãgyng by ꝑ throte
The murmure/and the cheſtes rebellyng
The groynyng/ and the priuy enpoyſonyng
I do vengeaunce and pleyne correccion
Whyle I dwell in the ſygne of the lyon
Myn is the ruyne of the hye halles
The fallyng of the towres & of the walles
Vpon the mynour/or vpon the carpenter
I ſtrike Sampſon/ ſhakyng the pyllers
And myn be the maladyes colde
The derke treaſons/and the caſtels olde
My lokyng is the father of peſtylence
Now weepe no more/I ſhal do my diligence
Thou Palamon/that art myne owne knyght
Wel haue thy lady/as thou haſt hope of right
Though Mars ſhal helpe his knyght nathelees
Nathleſſe yet muſte I fulfylle his pees
Al be ye not of our complexion
That cauſeth al day ſuche deuyſion

Am

I am thyn ayde/redy at thy wyll
Wepe no more/ I wol thy lyste fulfyll.
¶ Now wol I speken of these goddes aboute
Of Mars/and of Venus goddesse of loue
And playnly I wol tellen you as I can
The great effecte/of whiche that I began.

Great was the feste in Athenes that day
And eke that lusty seson in May
Made euery wyght to ben in swiche plesaunce
That al that day ne slepten they ne daunce
And spenten it in Venus hye seruyce
But because that they shulden aryse
Erly/for to se the great fyght
Vnto her rest went they at nyght
And on the morowe whan day gan spring
Of horse and harneys/noyse and clateryng
There was in the hostrryes al aboute
And to the palays rode there many a route
Of lordes/vpon stedes and palfreys
There mayst thou se deuysyng of harneys
So vncouthe/so riche/and wrought so wele
Of goldsmythry/of browdery/and of stele
The sheldes bright/testeres/and trappures
Gold hewen helmes/hauberkes/and cote armures
Lordes in parementes/on her courseres
Knyghtes of retenue/and eke squieres
Nayling the speares/and helmes bokelyng
Gyrdyng of sheldes with layneres lacyng
There as nede is/they were nothyng pood
The fomyng stedes on the golden bridell
Gnawyng/and faste the armurers also
With file and hammer/trying to and fro
Yemen on foote/and eemmes many one
With shorte staues/thicke as they may goon
Pypes/trompes/nakeres/and clarions
That in the bataylle hem May gladyn so thus
The palays ful of people lyke and doun
Here and there/there ley/holdyng her questyon
Dyuersyng of these thebane knyghtes two
Some said thus/some said it shulde be so
Some helde with him with the blacke berde
Some with the balled/some with the thikke berde
Some said he loked grym/and wolde fight
He hath a payre of sholdres of mayght.
What was the ball ful of dyuersyng
Longe after the somne gan to spring
The great Theseus of his slepe gan awake
With minstralcye and noyse that they make
Held yet the chambre of his palays riche
Tyl that the Thebane knyghtes/both yliche
Honoured Perry/and nyh to the place ifette.
¶ Duke Theseus is at the Window set
Arayed right as he were a god in trone
The people preased thyderward ful sone
Hym for to se/and done hym hye reuerence
And eke for to here his hest and sentence.
An herauude on a scaffolde made an oo
Tyl al the noyse of the people was doo
And whan he saw the people of noyse stylle
Thus shewed he the mighty dukes wylle.
¶ The lorde hath of his hye discrecion
Conſidered/that it were destruccion
To gentle blood/to fighten in this gyse
Of mortal bataylle/now in this empryse
Wherfore to shapen/that they shal not dye
He woll his first purpose modifye
No man therfore/vppayne of losse of lyfe
No maner shotte/polaxe/ne shorte knyfe
In to the lystes sende/or thyder bring
Ne short swerde to stycke with poynt byting
No man ne drawe/ne bere it by his syde
Ne no man shal to his felowe ryde
But one course/with a sharpe groundyn spere
Foyne if him lyst on foote/him self to were
And he that is at mischefe/shal be take
And not slayne/but brought to the stake
That shal ben ordayned on eyther syde
But thyder he shal by force/and there abyde
And if so fal/that the cheftayne be take
On eyther syde/or ells slayn his make
No lenger shal the turnayment laste
God spede you/gothe and laceth on faste
With swerdes and long maces fighteth your fyll
Gothe now your Way/this is the lordes Wyl.
¶ The voyce of the people touched heuen
So loude cryed they With merry steven
God saue suche a lorde/that is so good
He wyllith no destruccion of blood.
Vp gothe the trompes and the melodye
And to the lystes/rydeth the compaunye
By ordynaunce/throughout the cyte large
Hanged with cloth of golde/and not with sarge
Ful lyke a lorde this noble duke gan ryde

These

These two Thebans on euery syde
And after rode the quene and Emelye
And after that an other companye
Of one and other/after her degre
And thus they passen throughout the cyte
And to the lystes comen they be by tyme
It nas not of the day yet fully prime
Whan set was Theseus ful ryche and hye
Ipolita the quene/and Emelye
And other ladyes in degrees aboute
Unto the seetes preasseth al the route
And Westward/thurgh ỳ gates vnder Marte
Arcite/and eke an hundred of his parte
With baner reed/is entred right anon
And in the selue momet entred Palamon
Is/vnder Venus/est Warde in that place
With baner White/and hardy chere ỳ face
And in al the Worlde/to seken vp and doun
So euen Without Variacion
There nas suche companyes two
For there nas none so Wyse that coude sey
That any had of other auauntage
Of Worthynesse/ne of estate/ne age
So euen Were they chose to gesse
And in to the renges sayre they hem dresse
Whan ỳ her names redde Were euerychone
That in her nombre/gyle were there none
Tho were the gates shyt/ỳ cryed Was loude
Do now We pour deuer pong knyghtes proude
The heraudes left her pricking vp ỳ down
Now We syngen trompes loude and clarioun
There is no more to say/est and west
In gothe the sharpe speres fadly in the arrest
In gothe the sharpe spurres into the syde
There se may who can ryde/ỳ who can lyde
There shyueren shaftes/vpon sheldes thicke
He feleth thurgh the herte spoune the pricke
Up springeth ỳ speres/twenty foote on hyght
Out gothe the swordes/as the syluer bright
The helmes they to hewe/and to shrede
Out burst ỳ bloode/With sterne stremes rede
With mighty maces/the bones they tobrake
He thurgh the thickest of ỳ thurge gan threste
Ther stomblen stedes stronge/ỳ down goth al
He rolled vnder the foote as dothe a ball
He foyneth on his fete with a tronchoun
And he hurteth With his horse adoun
He thurgh the body is hurte/and sythe ytake
Maugre his heed/ỳ brought vnto the stake
As forward Was/right there he must abyde
Ay other is ladde on that other syde
And sometyme dothe hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refreshe/and drinke as hem leste
Ful ofte a day haue these Thebans two
To gyther met/and don eche other Wo
Vnhorsed hath eche other of hem twey
Ther was no tygre/in the vale of Galaphey
Whan hem Wexeth in fiers/Whan it is lyte
So cruell on the hunte/as is Arcyte
For ielous herte/vpon this Palamon
Ne in Belmarye/there is no fell lyon
That hunted is/or for his hunger Woode
Ne of his pray/desyreth so the bloode
As Palamon to slen his foe Arcite
The ielous strokes on her helmes byte
Out renneth the bloode on both her sydes rede
Sometyme an ende there is of euery dede
For er the sonne vnto the reste Wente
The stronge kyng Emetrius gan hente
This Palamon/as he faught With this Arcite
And made him Worde depe in his flesshe byte
And by force of Menty is he take
Vnyolden/and drawen to the stake
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The stronge kyng Lygurge is borne adoun
And kyng Emetrius/for al his strength
Is borne out of his sadle a swordes length
So hurte him Palamon or he Were take
Out al for naught/he was brought to ỳ stake
His hardy herte might him helpe naught
He must abyde/Whan that he was caught
By force/and eke by compositon
Who sore Weth now With wofful Palamon
That mote no more gon agayne to fyght.
And Whan ỳ Theseus had seen ỳ syght
He cryed hoe: no more/for it is don.
Ne none shal lenger to his fellowe gon
I wol be true iuge/and not partye
Arcite of Thebes shal haue Emelye
That by his fortune hath her fayre ywonne
Anon there is a noyse of people bygonne
For ioye of this/so loude ỳ hye withall
It semed that the lystes shulde fall.

What

What may no wyght seyne Venus blysse
What seyth she no wyght but doth hyr quest
But wepeth and sobbeth for wantyng of her wyll (ke
Tyll that her teares on her brest adowne fall
Sayd she: I am a shamed doutelesse
Saturne sayd: doughter fayre thy sorowes
Mars hath al his wyll/ his knyght hath his bone
And by myne hed/ thou shalt be eased soone.
The trompes with the loude mynstralcye
The semaundes/ that so loude pype and crye
Deth in the temple/ for sowne of daun Arcyte
But herkeneth what myne sysmeth noyse a lyte
Whiche a myracle there befell anon
This poure Arcite hath his helme on pdon
And on a courser/ for to shewe his face
He pricketh endelonge the large place
Lokyng vpward vpon Emelye
And she agayn him cast a frendly eye
(For woman/ as to speke in comune
They sore wey al the fauour of fortune)
And was al his chere/ as in his herte
Out of the grounde a fyre infernal sterte
From Pluto sent/ at the requeste of Saturne
For whiche his horse for feare gan to tourne
And lepe a fyde/ and foundred as he lepe
And er that Arcite may take kepe
He proffyt him on the pomel of his hed
That in the place he lay as he were ded
His brest to brosten with his sadel bowe
As blacke he lay as any cole or crowe
So was the blode yronnen in his face
Anon he was yborne out of the place
With herte sore/ to Theseus paleys
Tho was he corven out of his harneys
And in a bedde ybrought ful fayre and blyue
For he was yet in memorye/ and on lyue
And alway cryeng after Emelye.
Duke Theseus/ with al his compayne
Is comen home to Athenes his cyte
With al blysse and great solempnyte
Al be it that this auenture was fal
He wolde not discomforte hem al
Wey sayd ese/ that Arcite shulde not dye
He shuld ben yhealed of his maladye
And of an other thyng they were as fayne
That of hem al there was none slayne
Al were they sore hurte/ and namely one
That with a spere was thorled his brest bone
Two other yonges and that lyth knyghtes
Batte had salues and fayre had charmes
Fermacies of herbes and eke fayre
They dronken/ for they wolde her lymes hayre
For which this noble duke as he wel can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuel al the longe nyght
Vnto the straunge lordes as it was ryght
Ne there was holde no discomfortyng
But as vnto/ of a tourneyng
For sothly there was no discomfyture
For fallyng is not but auenture
Ne to be sadde yfere vnto a stake
Vnyolden/ and with twenty knyghtes take
One persone alone withouten any mo
And hurted forthe by arme/ foote/ and toe
And eke his stede dreuen forthe with staues
With footemen/ bothe yemen and knaues
It was areysed ryght no dysampe
There may no man clepe it cowardyse
For whyche anon/ duke Theseus dyd crye
To stynten al rancour and enuye
The gree as wel of one syde as of other
And eyther syde pryse/ as other brother
And yaue hem ryghtes after her degre
And fully feeld a seuen dayes thre
And conueyed the knyghtes worthyly
Out of his toune/ a dayes iourney largely
And home went euery man the ryght way
Ther was no more/ but farwel/ haue good (day
Of this batayle/ I wol no more endyte
But speke of Palamon and Arcyte
Swelleth the brest of Arcite/ and the sore
Encreaseth at his herte more and more
The clotered blode/ for any leche craft
Corrumpeth/ and is in his body laft
That neyther veyne blode/ ne ventousyng
Ne drynke of herbes/ may be helpyng
By vertue expulsyf/ or animal
For thyldre vertue cleaped natural
Ne may the venym voyde/ ne expel
The pypes of his longes began to swel
And euery lacerte/ in his brest adoun
Is shent with venym and corrupcioun
Him gayneth neyther/ for to get his lyfe
Vomyte vpward/ ne downward laxatyfe
Al is to hurt thylke regyon

Nature

Nature hath no domination
And certainly / ther as nature wol nat werche
Farwel phisyke / go bere the corse to chirche
This is al and some / that Arcite must dye
For whiche he sendeth after Emelye
And Palamon his cosyn dere
Thus said he thus / as ye shal after here.

Nought may my wofol spirite in my herte
Declare a poynt of al my sorowes smerte
To you my lady that I love most
But I bequeth the seruyce of my goste
To you / aboven any creature
Sithe that my lyfe may no lenger dure
Alas the wo / alas my paynes stronge
That I for you have suffred / and so longe
Alas the dethe / alas myne Emelye
Alas departyng of our company
Alas my hertes quene / alas my lyues wyfe
Myne hertes lady / ender of my lyfe
What is the worlde / what axen men to have?
Now with his love / now in his colde grave
Alone withouten any company
Farwel my swete foe / myne Emelye
And softe take me in your armes tway
For the love of god herkeneth what I say.

I have here with my cosyn Palamon
Had stryfe and rancour many day agon
For love of you / and for my jelousye
And Jupiter so wisely my soule gye
To speken of a seruaunt properly
With circumstaunces al trewly
That is to say / trouthe / honour / & knighthede
Wysedome / humblesse / estate / & hye kynrede
Fredome / and al that longeth to that arte
So Jupiter have of my soule parte
As in this worlde / right now ther stondeth no
So worthy to be loved as is Palamon
That serveth you and wol don al his lyfe
And if that ye shul ever ben a wyfe
Forget nat Palamon the gentyl man
And with that worde his speche faylen began
For from his feet unto the herte was come
The colde of dethe that had him nomen
And yet moreover for in his armes two
The vital strength is lost and al ago
Save only the intellecte without more
That dwelled in his herte syke and sore
Gan faylen / when the herte felte deathe
Dusked his eyen two / and fayled breathe
But on his lady / yet caste he his eye
His laste worde was / mercy Emelye
His spirit chaunged / and out went there
Whyther wende I can not tel / ne where
Therfore I stynte I nam no divinistre
Of soule fynde I not in this registre
Ne me lyst not the opinions to telle
Of hem / though they writen where they dwelle
Arcite is colde / that Mars his soule gye
Now wol I speke forthe of Emelye.

Whight Emelye / and ever wery Palamon
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swouning / & bare hir fro the corse away
What helpeth it to tarry forthe the day
To telle how she wept both eve and morwe
For in such case women have such sorowe
Whan that her husbandes ben fro hem go
That for the more parte they sorowen so
Or elles fallen in such maladye
That at the laste / certayn they dye
Infinite ben the sorowes and the teres
Of olde folke / and folke of tender yeres
In al the towne / for dethe of this Theban
For him there wepeth both child and man
So great weping was there not certayne
Whan Hector was brought / al fresshe yslayn
To Troy alas / the pyte that was there
Crateching of chekes / rentyng eke of here
Why woldest thou be dede / thus wommen crye
And haddest gold ynough / and Emelye?
No man might glade Theseus
Saving his olde father Egeus
That knew this worldes transmutacions
As he had seen it / bothe up and doun
Joye after wo / and wo after gladnesse
And shewed him ensamples and lykenesse
Right as there deyed never man (quod he)
That he ne lyved in erthe in some degre
Right so there lyved never man / he sayde
In al this worlde / that sometyme he ne deyde
This worlde is but a throwe ful of wo
And we ben pylgrymes passyng to and fro
Dethe is an ende of every worldes sore.
And over al this yet sayd he muche more
To this effecte / ful wysely to exhorte

The

The people/that they shulde hym reuomfort
Duke Theseus with all his busy cure
Lasteth vnto/whan that the sepulture
Of good Arcite/shal best ynaked be
And eke most honorable of degre
And at the laste he tooke conseyl vpon
That there as Arcite and Palamon
Had first loue/the battayle hym bytwene
That in the same seson grene/sauf a greue
There as he had his amorous desyres
His complayntes/& first loue his hotte fyres
He wolde make a fyre/in whiche the office
Funeral he myght hym al accomplyce
He hath anon commanded to hacke & hewe
The olden olde/and lay hem al on a rewe
In cartes/wel arayed for to brenne.
His officers with swyfte foote they renne
And right anon at his comaundement.
And after Theseus hath sente
After a bere/and it al ouer spradde
With cloothe of gold/the richest that he had
And of the same suite he clothed Arcite
Vpon his handes his gloues whyte
Eke on his hed a crowne of laurer grene
And in his hande a swerde ful bright & kene
He layde hym bare the visage on the bere
Therwith he wepte/that pyte was to here
And for the people shulde sene hym all
Whan it was day/ he brought hym to ỹ hall
That roreth of the crye & of the sorowes sonne
Tho gan this wofull theban Palamon
With glysterynge berde/& ruddy shynyng heres
In clothes blacke/dropped al with teres
And passyng other of wepyng Emely
The rufulleste of al the company.
And in as moche as the seruyce shulde be
The more noble/and ryche in his degre
Duke Theseus let forthe the stedes bring
That trapped were in steele all glisterynge
And couered with the armes of dan Arcite
Vpon these stedes great and whyte
Ther satten folke/of which one bare his shelde
Another his spere/in his handes helde
The thirde bare with hym a bowe turkeys
Of burnt golde was the case & eke the harnes
And rydyng forthe a pace with sorowful chere
Toward the groue/as ye shal after here.

The noblest of the grekes/that there were
Vpon her shoulders carryed the bere
With stately pace/and eyen red and wete
Throughout the cyte/by the maystres strete
That spradd was al with blak/ that wofull hyre
Right of the same is the strete ywyse
Vpon the right hande went Egeus
And on the other syde duke Theseus
With vessels in her hande/of golde ful fyne
Al ful of hony/mylke/bloode/and wyne
Eke Palamon/with full great compayny
And after that/came wofull Emely
With fyre in hande/as was ỹ tyme the gyse
To don the office of funeral seruyse
Hye labour/and ful great apparayling
Was at seruyce/and at fyre makyng
That with his grene toppe the heuen raught
And twenty fadome of brede armes straught
This is to sayn/the bowes were so brode
Of strawe first there was layde many a lode.
But how the fyre was maked vp on height
And eke the names/ how the trees heyght
As oke/fyre/birche/asp/elder/elme/popelere
Wyllow/holm/plane/boyne/thestyn/laurere
Maple/thorne/beche/wyde/hasel/ whipultre
How they were felde/shal nat be tolde for me
Ne how the goddes ronne vp and doun
Disherited of her habitacioun
In whiche they wonned in rest and pees
Nymphes/Faunes/and Amadriades
Ne how the beestes/ne the briddes all
Fledden for feare/whan the trees fall
Ne how the ground agast was of the lyght
That was not wonte to se the sonne bright
Ne how the fyre was couched first with stre
And than with drye stickes clouen a thre
And than with grene wodde/and spicery
And than with cloothe of golde and perry
And garlondes hangyng with many a flowre
The myrre/the encense/with swete odoure
Ne how Arcite lay among al this
Ne what richesse about his body is
Ne how that Emely/as was the gyse
Put in the fyre of funeral seruyse
Ne how she swouned/whan made was ỹ fyre
Ne what she spake/ne what was her desyre
Ne what iewelles men in the fyre caste

Whan

Whan that the fyre Was great & brent faste
Ne how some cast her shelde/ & some her spere
And of her bestementes/ whiche þ they were
And cuppes full of Wyne/ mylke/ & bloode
In to the fyre/ that brent as it were Woode
Ne how the grekes With a huge route
Thryse rydden all the fyre aboute
Upon the leste hande/ with a loude showting
And thryse With her speares clateryng
And thryse how the ladyes gan cryе
Ne how that ladde was hom Warde Emelye
Ne how that Arcite is brent to asshen colde
Ne how the lyche Wake Was holde
All that nyght/ ne how the grekes play
The Wake playes/ kepe I nat to say
Who wrestled best naked/ With oyle anoynt
Ne Who bare hym best in euery poynt
I woll not tellen how they gone
Whom to Athenes/ Whan the play is done
But shortly to the poynt than woll I wende
And make of my longe tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of yeres
All stynteth is the mourning and the teres
Of grekes/ by one generall assent
Than semed me there Was a parlement
At Athenes/ upon a certayne poynt and cause
Amonge the Whiche poyntes yspoken was
To have with certayne countrees alyaunce
And have of Thebans fully obeysaunce
For Whiche this noble Theseus anon
Let sende after this gentyll Palamon
Unwyste of hym what Was the cause & Why:
But in his blacke clothes sorowfully
He came at his comaundement on hye
Tho sent Theseus after Emelye.
Whan they were set/ & hushte Was þ place
And Theseus abydden hath a space
Er any Worde came from his Wyse brest
His eyen sette he there hym lest
And With suche a sadde ysage/ he syked stylle
And after that/ right thus he sayd his Wylle.
¶ The first mouer of the cause above
Whan he first made the fayre chayne of loue
Great Was the effecte/ & hye Was his entente
Well Wyste he Why/ & What therof he mente
For With that fayre chayne of loue he bonde
The fyre/ the eyre/ the water/ and the londe
In certayne bondes/ that they may not flee
That same prince and that mouer/ quod he
Hath stablissched i this Wrecched Worlde adoun
Certeyn dayes and duracion
To all that are engendred in this place
Ouer the Whiche day they may not pace
All mowe they yet the dayes abredge
There nedeth none auctoure to ledge
For it is proued by experience
But that me lyst declarey my sentence
Than may ye by this ordre discerne
That thylke mouer stable is and eterne
Well may men knowe/ but he be a fole
That euery parte is deryued from his hole
For nature hath not taken his begynnyng
Of one parte or cantell of a thyng
But of a thyng that perfyte is and stable
Descendyng so/ tyll it be corrumpable
And therfore of his Wyse purueyaunce
He hath so well bylet his ordynaunce
That spores of thynges and progressyons
Shullen endure by successyons
And not eterne/ Without any lye
Thus mayst thou understande & se at eye.
Lo the ok/ that hath so longe a norysshyng
Fro the tyme þ it begynneth first to spryng
And hath so longe a lyfe/ as ye may se
Yet at the last/ Wasted is the tre
Consydreth eke/ how that the harde stone
Under our fete/ on whiche We treade & gone
Yet wasteth it/ as it lyeth in the wey
The brode ryuer somtyme Weyeth drey
The great tounes/ se we wane and wende
Than ye se that all this thyng hath ende
And man and woman se shall we also
That nedeth in one of the termes two
That is to sayne/ in youthe or elde of age
He mote be deed/ a thyng as well as a page
Some in his bedde, some in the depe se
Some in the large felde/ as ye may se
It helpeth not/ all gothe that ylyke wey
Than may ye se that al thyng mote dey
What maketh this/ but Jupiter the kyng:
That is prince/ and cause of all thyng
Conuertyng all to his propre Wylle
From Whiche it is deryued sothe to tell

And

And here agayne/no creature on lyue
Of no degre/auayleth for to stryue
Than is it Wysdome/as thynketh me
To make Vertue of neressyte
And take it wel/that we may not eschewe
And namely that to vs al is dewe
And who so grutcheth aught/he dothe folye
And rebel is to hym that al may gye
And certaynly/a man hath moste honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour
Whan he is spyken of his good name
Than hath he don his frendes no hym no shame
And gladder ought his frendes be of his deth
Whan with honour yolde is vp the breth
Than whan his name apalled is for age
For al forgetyn is his vassellage
Than is it best/as for a worthy fame
To dyen/whan he is best of name
The contrarye of al this is wylfulnesse
Why grutchen we: why haue we heuynesse
That good Arcite/of cheualry the floure
Departed is/with duetye and with honoure
Out of this foule prison/of this lyfe:
Why grutchen here his cosyn and his wyfe
Of his welfare/that loueth hym so wele:
Can he hem thanke: nay god Wot neuer a dele
That bothe his soule/& eke hem offende
And yet they mo we not her lustes amende:
What may conclude of this longe story
But after sorowe/I rede vs be merry
And thanke Iupiter of al his grace
And er we departen from this place
I rede we make vs of sorowes two
One perfyte ioye/lastyng euer mo
And loke now where most sorowe is herin
There wol I first amende and begyn.
Sustren quod he/this is my full assent
With al the people of my parlement
That gentil Palamon/your owne knyght
That seruyth you with wyl/herte/& myght
And euer hath done/sythe ye first hym knewe
That ye shal of your grace vpon hym rewe
And take hym for your husbonde and for lorde
Lene me your honde/for this is our accorde.
Let se now of your womanly pyte
He is a kynges brother sonne pardie
And though he were a poure bachelere
Syn he hath serued you so many a yere
And had for you so great aduersyte
It moste ben consydered/me thynketh me
For gentil mercy ought to passen ryght.
Than spak he thus to Palamon ye knyght
I trowe there nede lytel sermonyng
To make you to assenten to this thyng
Come nere/& taketh your lady by the honde
Doun wyth hem was maked anon the bonde
That hyght matrimony or mariage
By al the counsayle of the baronage
And thus with al blysse and melodye
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye.
And god that al this worlde hath wrought
Sende hym his loue/ye it hath so dere bought
For now is Palamon in al wele
Lyuyng in blysse/in richesse/and in hele
And Emely hym loueth so tendrely
And he her serueth so gentilly
That neuer was there no worde hem bytwene
Of ielousye/or of any other tene
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye
And god saue al this faire compayne.

Here endeth the knyghtes tale/ and here folowe the Wyfs lers prologue.

Whan ye knight had thus his tale ytolde
In al the company nas there yong ne olde
That he ne sayd/it was a noble story
And worthy to be drawen in memory
And namely the gentyls euerychone
Our hoste lough and swore/so mote I gone
Thus gothe a ryght/vnbokled is the male
Let se now who shal tel a nother tale
For truely/the game is wel begonne
Now telleth sir monke if ye conne
Somwhat/to quyte with the knyghtes tale
The monke/for dronken was al pale
So that vnnethes vpon his horse he satte
He nolde auale his hyght hoode ne hatte
Ne abyde no man for his curtesye
But in Pylates voyce he began to crye
And swore by armes/blode/and bones

The Mylers prologue.

I can a noble tale for the nones (tale
With whiche I wol now̄e quite the knight his
¶ Our hoste sawe that he was dronken of ale
And sayd: abyde Robyn leue brother
Some better man shal tel vs first an other
Abyde/ and let vs worche thriftely.
¶ By goddes soule (quod he) that wol not I
For I wol speke/ or elis go my way
Our hoste answerde: tel on a deuel way
Thou arte a foole/ thy wytte is ouercome
Now̄e herken eth quod the myller/ al & some
But first I make protestacion
That I am dronke/ I know̄e it by my soun
And therfore if I mispeke or say
Wyte it the ale of Southwarke/ I you pray
For I wol tel a legende and a lyfe
Bothe of a carpenter and his wyfe
How̄e that a clerke set a wrightes cappe.
¶ The Reue answerde & said/ stynte thy clap
Let be thy leude dronken harlottry
It is a synne/ and eke a great folye
To apayren any man/ or hym defame
And eke to bryng wyues in suche blame
Thou mayst ynoughe of other thinges sayn.
This dronken myller spake ful sone agayn
And sayd: leue brother Oswolde
Who hath no wyfe is no cokolde
But I say not therfore that thou arte one
There ben ful good wyues many one
Why arte thou angry with my tale now̄e
I haue a wyfe parde/ as wel as thou
Yet nolde I for al the oxen in my plough
Take vpon me more than ynough
To demen of my self that I am one
I wol bileue that I am none
An husbonde shulde not ben inquisityfe
Of goddes pryuete/ ne of his wyfe
For so he fynde goddes foyson there
Of the remenaunt/ nedeth nat to enquere.
What shulde I more say/ but this Myller
He nolde his wordes for no man forbere
But told his cherles tale in his maner
Me forthinketh I shal reherce it here
And therfore/ euery gentil wight I pray
Demeth not for goddes sone/ that I say
Of yuel entent/ but that I mote reherce
Her tales al/ be they better or werse
Or elis falsen some of my matere
And therfore/ who so lyst it not to here
Turne ouer the lefe/ and chose another tale
For ye shal synde ynow̄e great and smale
Of historial thyng/ that toucheth gentylesse
And eke moralite/ and holynesse
Blame not me/ if that ye chose amys
The Myller is a cherle/ ye know̄e wel this
So was the Reue eke/ and other mo
And harlotry they tolde eke bothe two
Auyse you/ and put me out of blame
And eke men shuld not make ernest of game.

¶ Here endeth the Mylers pro-
logue: and here after fo-
loweth his tale.

Hyslom ther Was dwelling I Oxenforde
A riche gnoffe/ yͤ gestes helde to borde
And of his craffte he was a carpenter
With him there Was dwellyng a poore scoler
Had ylerned arte/ but al his fantasye
Was turned to lerne astrologye
And coude a certayne of conclusyons
To demen by interrogacions
If that men asked him in certayne houres
Whan yͤ men sholde haue droughte or shoures
Or if men asked him What sholde befall
Of euery thyng/ I may not rekken al.
This clerke Was clepid hende Nycholas
Of derne loue he coude and of solas
And therto he was slye and vnder mine
And pryse to a mayden wolde to se
A chambre had he in that hostelry
Alone/ Withouten any compayny
Ful fetously dight with herbes sote
And he himself as swete as is the rote
Of lycorys/ or of any spycerote
His alambyke/ and boxes grete and smale
His astrelagoure stonding for his ale
His augrym stones leyng fayre a parte
On shelues couched at his beddes herde
His presse prouerbed with a solempne rede
And al aboute there lay a gay sautrye
On whiche he made on nyghtes melodye
So swetely/ that al the chambre ronge
And Angelus ad virginem he songe
And after that he songe the kynges note
Ful often blyssed was his merry throte
And thus the swete clerke his time spente
After his frendes fyndyng and his rente.
¶ Thus carpenter had wedded newe a wyfe
Whiche that he loued more than his lyfe
Of eyghtene yere she was of age
Jelous he was and kept her strayte in rage
For she was wylde/ and ponge: & he was olde
And demed him selfe to ben a cokewolde
He knew not Cato: for his wyfe was rude
That bade men wedde her symplytude
Man shulde wedde after her astate
For youthe and elde is often at debate
But sythe she was fallen in the snare
He must endure/ as other folke his care.
Fayre was this ponge wyfe/ a chaunteclere
As any Wylde hir body gentil and smale
A sparuer she wered/ barred al with sylke
A barme clothe/ as whyte as morne mylke

Lo. Upon

Upon her lendes/ ful of many a gore
Whyte was her smock/ & embrouded al byfore
And eke behynde on her colere about
Of cole blacke sylke/ with in and eke without
The tapes of her whyte volypere
Were of the same sute of her colere
Her sylet brode of sylke/ and set ful hye
And sikerly/ she had a lyberous eye
Ful smale ypulled were her browes two
And tho were bent/ and blacke as any slo
She was moche more blyssful for to se
Than is the newe Perenet tre
And softer than the wol is of a wether
And by her gyrdel honge a purse of lether
Tassed with sylke/ and perled with latoun
In al this worlde/ to seken up and doun
There nys no man so wyse/ y couthe thenche
So gay a popelote/ or so gay a wenche
Ful brighter was the shynyng of her hewe
Than in the tour the noble forged newe
But of her songe/ it was so loude & perne
As any swalowe sytting on a berne
Therto she couthe skyppe/ & make a game
As any kyde or calfe folowyng his dame
Her mouth was swete/ as braket or the methe
Or hoorde of apples/ leyd in hey or hethe
Wynsyng she was/ as is a wily colte
Long as a mast/ and upright as a bolte
A broche she bare on her lowe collere
As brode as the bosse of a bokelere
Her shoos were laced on her legges hye
She was a primrole/ and a pyggesnye
For any lorde to lyggen in his bedde
Or yet for any good man to wedde.
Now sir and este sire/ so byfel the caas
That on a day this hende Nycholas
Fel with this ponge wyse to rage and pley
Whyle that her husbonde was at Oseney,
As clerkes ben ful fetel and queynte
And primely he caught her by the queynte
And sayde I wys but I have my wyll
For derne love of the lemman I spyll
And helde her faste by the haunche bones
And said: lemman love me wel at ones
Or I wol dyen also god me save
And she sprange as a colte in a trave
And with her heed she wryth faste away
And said: I wol not kysse the by my fay
Why let be quod she/ let be Nicholas
Or I wol crye out harrow and alas
Do way your bondes for your curtesye.
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye
And spake so fayre/ & profered him so faste
That she her love graunted him at laste
And swore her oth/ by seynt Thomas of Kent
That she wolde ben at his comaundement
Whan that she may her leyser wel aspye
Hy husbonde is so ful of ielousye
That but ye wayte wel/ and be prime
I wotte right wel I nam but deed/ quod she
Ye mote ben ful derne as in this caas.
Nay therof care ye not/ quod Nycholas
A clerke had lytherly ybyset his wyte
But if he couthe a carpenter begyle
And thus they were accorded/ and ysworne
To wayten a tyme/ as I have sayd byforne
And whan Nicholas had don thus every dele
And thanked her aboute the lendes wele
He kyssed her swete/ than taketh his sautrye
And playeth faste/ and maketh melodye
Than sel it thus/ that to the parysshe cherche
(Christes owne workes for to werche)
This good wyfe went upon an holyday
Her forheed shone as bryght as any day
So was it washt/ whan she lete her werke.
Now was ther of y cherche a parysh clerke
The whiche that was cleped Absolon
Crulle was his heare/ & as golde it shon
And strouted as a fanne large and brode
Ful strayght & even lay his joly shode
His rode was redde/ his eyen gray as goos
With Poules wyndo wes corven on his shoos
In hosen redde he went fetously
Yclyde he was ful smal and propurely
Al in a kyrtell of a lyght wagot
Ful fayre and thicke bey the poynts set
And therupon he had a gay surplyse
As whyte as is the blosome on the rys
A merry chylde he was/ so god me save
Wel coude he let blode/ clyppe/ and shave
And make a chartre of lande/ & a quyt clayme
In twenty manere coude he trypp & daunce
After the scole of Oxenforde tho
And with his legges casten to and fro

And

And play songes on a small rybybe
Therto he songe somtyme a loude quyuere
And as wel couth he play on a getterne
In al the toune nas brewhouse ne tauerne
That he ne visyted with his solas
Ther any gay tapstere was
But sothe to sayn he was somwhat squaymous
Of fartyng/and of speche daungerous.
¶ Thus Absolon/that was ioly and gay
Gothe with a censer on the sonday
Censyng the wyues of the parisshe faste
And many a louely loke on hem he caste
And namely on this carpenters wyfe
To loke on her hym thought a mery lyfe
She was so propre/and sweete and lyckerous
I dare wel sayne if she had ben a mous
And he a catte/he wolde haue her hente anon.
This parysshe clerke/this ioly Absolon
Hath in his herte suche a loue longyng
That of no wyfe toke he none offeryng
For curtesye he said he wolde none
The moone/whan it was nyght broght shone
And Absolon his gyterne hath ytake
For paramours he thought for to wake
And forthe he gothe/iolous and amerous
Tyl he came to the carpenters hous
A litel after the cocke had pro we
And dressed him by a shot wyndowe
That was vpon the carpenters wall
He syngeth in his voyce gentyle and small
Now dere lady/if thy wyl be
I pray you that ye wolde rewe on me
Ful wel accordyng to his gyterneryng.
¶ This carpenter awoke/& herde him syng
And spake vnto his wyfe anon
What Alyson/herest thou not Absolon
That chaunteth thus vnder our boures wal?
And she answerde her husbonde ther withal
Yes god Wot/I here him euery dele
This passeth forth/al nyght dyd Absolon
Wo wouth her/that him was wo begon
He waketh al the nyght/and al the day
He kembeth his lockes broode/& made him gay
He wouth her by menes and brocage
And swore/he wolde ben her owne page
He syngeth brokkyng as a nyghtyngale
He sent her pyment/mede/and spyced ale
And wafres pypyng hotte out of the glede
And for she was of toune/he profered hir mede
For some folke wol be wonne for rychesse
And some for strokes/& some with gentilesse.
Sometyme to shew his lightnesse & maistrye
He playeth Herodes on a scaffolde hye
But what auayleth him/as in this case?
So loueth she this hende Nycholas
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes horne
He ne had for his labour but a scorne
And thus she maketh Absolon her ape
And al his requeste turneth to a iape
For soothe this prouerbe it is no lye
Men say thus alway/the nye slye
Maketh the ferre loue to be lothe
For though that Absolon be woode or wrothe
Because that he ferre was from her syghte
Thus nye Nycholas stode in his syghte.
But now we leave the wel hende Nycholas
And Absolon may wayle and syng alas
And so byfel it on a saterday
This carpenter was gon to Oseney
And hende Nicholas and Alyson
Acorded were to this conclusyon
That Nycholas shulde shapen hem a wyle
Thus scly ielous carpenter to begyle
And if so be the game went a ryght
She shulde slepe in his armes al nyght
For this was his desyre/and hers also
And right anon/without wordes mo
This Nycholas no longer wolde tarye
But doth ful softe vnto his chambre carye
Bothe meate and drynke/for a day or twey
And to her husbonde bade her for to say
If that he asked after Nycholas
She shulde say she nyste where he was
Of al that day she sawe him not with eye
She trowed he was in some maladye
For no cry that her mayde coude call
He vnlde answere/for nought that myght befal.
¶ Thus passeth forthe al the ydle saterday
That Nycholas shyl in his chambre lay
And ete/and drunke/& slept/& dyd what him lyste
Tyl sonday/that the sonne gothe to reste.
¶ This scly carpenter hath great wonderyng
Of Nycholas/or what thing myght him eyle

Lest

And

And said: I am a dread by saynte Thomas
It stondeth not aright with Nycholas
God shylde that he dyed sodaynly
This worlde is nowe ful tykel sekerly
I sawe to day a corse borne to cherche
That now on monday last I sawe him werche
Go vp (quod he vnto his knaue) anone
Cleape at his dore/ & knocke fast with a stone
Loke howe it is/ and tel me boldely.
¶ This knaue went vp ful stirdely
And at the chambre dore/ whyle that he stode
He cryed and knocked as he were woode
What how: What do ye mayster Nicholay:
How may ye slepe al this longe day:
But al for naught/ he herde not a worde.
An hole he founde ful lowe vpon a borde
There as the catte was wonte in to crepe
And at that hole he lobed in ful depe
And at the laste he had of him a syght.
¶ This Nycholas sate euer gapyng vpright
As he had kyked on the newe mone
Adowne he gothe/ & tolde his mayster sone
In what araye he sawe this ylke man.
¶ This carpenter to blyssen him began
And said: nowe helpe vs seynt Frideswyde
A man wot lytel what shal him betyde
This man is falley/ with his Astronomye
In some woodnesse/ or in some agonye
I thought ay wel howe it shulde be
Men shulden not knowe of goddes preuete
Ye blessed be alway the lewde man
That naught but onely his byleue can.
Right so ferde another clerke w^t astronomy
He walked in to the feldes for to pry
Vpon the sterres/ to wete what shulde befall
Tyl he was in a marlpyt yfall
He sawe not that/ yet by saynte Thomas
Me reweth sore on hende Nycholas
He shal be arated out of his studyeng
If that I may/ by Jesus heuen kyng.
Get me a staffe/ that I may vnderspore
Whyle that thou Robyn heuest vp the dore
He shal out of his studyeng/ as I gesse
And to the chambre dore he gan him dresse
His knaue was a stronge carle for the nones
And by the haspe bare vp the dore at ones
In to the floore the dore fel anone.
¶ This Nicholas sate as fyl as any stone
And euer gaped vpwarde into the eyre.
This carpenter wende he were in asspeyre
And hente him by the shulders mightyly
And shoke him harde/ and cryed spytously
What Nycholas/ what how loke adowne
Awake/ and thynke on Chrystes passyon
I crouche & from elues & fro wicked wightes
Ther with the nyghtspel he said anonrightes
On foure halues of the house aboute
And on the threshfolde of the dore without
Jesu Christ/ and saynt Benedight
Blysse this house from euery wycked wight
Fro the nyghtes mare the white Pater noster
Where wonnest thou saynt Peters sustre:
¶ And at the laste this hende Nycholas
Gan for to syke sore/ and said alas
Shal al this worlde be lore eftsones nowe:
This carpēter answerde: what sayst thou:
What thinke on god/ as we do men ỳ swynke
This Nycholas answerde: speke me dronke
And after wol I speke in prynete
Of certayne thinges/ that toucheth the & me
I wol telleyn it none other man certayne.
This carpēter goth downe/ & cometh agayn
And brought of mighty ale a large quarte
And whan that eche of hem had dronken his parte
This Nycholas/ his doore faste shette
And doune the carpenter by him sette
And said: Johan hoste myne lefe and dere
Thou shalte vpon thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt my counsel wrey
For it is Christes counsayle that I say
And if thou telst it any man/ thou arte forlore
For this vengeaūce thou shalte haue therfore
That if thou wrap me/ thou shalt be woode.
¶ Nay Christ it forbyd for his holy bloode
Quod tho this sely man/ I am no blabbe
Ne though I say it/ I am not lefe to gabbe
Say what thou wolte/ I shal it neuer tell
To childe ne wyfe/ by him that harowed hell.
Nowe John (quod Nicholas) I wol not lye
I haue yfounden in myn astrologye
As I haue loked in the mone bryght
That nowe on monday nexte/ at quarter nyght
Shal fal a rayne/ & that so wylde & woode
That halfe so great was neuer Noes floode
This

This world (he said) in lesse than in an houre
Shal al be drenyte/ so hydous is the shoure
Thus shal mankynde drenche/ & lese her lyfe.
This carpenter answerd & said: alas my wife
And shal she drenche? Alas myn Alyson
For sorowe of this he fel almoste adoun
And said: Is there no remedye in this caas?
Pes pes (quod hende Nycholas)
If thou wolt werche after lore and rede
Thou maist not werche after thyn owen hede
For thus sayth Salomon/ þ was ful trewe
Worke al by counsayle/ & thou shalt not rewe.
And if thou wylt werken by good counsayle
I undertake/ without mayle or sayle
yet shal I saue her/ and the and me.
Hast thou not herde how saued was Noe?
Whan þ our lorde had warned him byforne
That al the worlde with water shuld be lorne
Pes (quod the carpenter) ful pore a go.
Hast thou not herde (quod Nicholas) also?
The sorowe of Noe with his felleshyp
Yt that he myght gete his wyfe to shippe
Him had leuer/ I dare wel undertake
At thilke tyme/ than al his wethers blake
That she had a shyp her selfe alone
And therfore wost thou what is best to done?
This asketh haste/ and of an hasty thyng
Men may not preche ne make tarrying
Anon go get vs faste in to this inne
A knedyng trowe or ellis a kemelyn
For eche of vs/ but loke that they ben large
In which men may owme swymme as in a barge
And haue therin vitayles suffysaunte
But for a day/ fye on the remenaunte
The water shal aslake and gon away
Aboute prime vpon the nexte day
But Robyn may not wete of this thy knaue
Ne eke thy mayde Gylle/ I may not saue
Aske not why: for though thou aske me
I wol not tel goddes pryuete
Suffyseth the/ but if thy wytte be madde
To haue as great a grace as Noe hadde
Thy wyfe shal I wel saue out of doute
Go now the thy way/ and speede the forth anone
Dut whan thou hast for her/ & the/ and me
Ygeten vs thise knedyng tubbes three
Than shalt thou hange hem in þ roof ful hye
That no man of our purueyaunce espye
And whan thou hast don thus as I haue saide
And hast our vitayle faire in hem playde
And eke an ax to smyte the corde a two
Whan that the water cometh/ þ we may go
And breake an hole on hye vpon the gable
Vnto the garden warde/ ouer the stable
That we may freely passen forthe our way
Whan that the great shoure is gon away
Than shalt thou swym as merry I undertake
As doth the whyte ducke after her drake
Than wol I clepe/ how Alyson/ how John
Be merry: for the floode wol passe anon
And thou wolt sayn/ hayle maister Nicholay
Good morowe: for I se wel that it is day
And than we shul be lordes al our lyfe
Of al the worlde/ as was Noe and his wyfe
But of one thyng I warne the ful ryght
Be wel auysed on that nyght
That we ben entred into the shyppes borde
That none of vs ne speke not a worde
Ne clepe ne crye/ but ben in his prayere
For it is goddes owne heste dere.
Thy wyfe & thou mot hange fayre atwynne
For that byt wyt pou shal be no synne
No more in lokyng than there shal in dede
This ordynaunce is sayd/ go god the spede
To morowe at nyght/ whan men ben al a slepe
In to our knedyng tubbes wol we crepe
And sytten there/ abydyng goddes grace
Go now the thy way/ I haue no lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermonyng
Men sayn thus: sende the wyse/ & say nothyng
Thou art so wyse/ it nedeth the not to teche
Go saue our spuse/ and that I the beseche.
This sely carpenter gothe forth his way
Ful ofte he sayd/ alas and welaway
And to his wyfe he tolde his pryuete
And she was ware/ and knewe it bet than he
What al this queynte caste was for to sey
But nathelesse/ she ferde as she wolde dey
And sayd: alas/ go forthe thy way anone
Helpe vs to skape/ or we be dede echone
I am thy trewe verey wedded wyfe
Go dere spouse/ and helpe to saue our lyfe.
Lo/ whicke a great thyng is affection
Men may dye of ymagynation

So depe may impressyon be take.
This sely carpenter begynneth to quake
Him thynketh verily that he may se
Noes floode come walkyng as the see
To drenchen Alyson/his hony dere
He wepeth/waylyth/and maketh sory chere
He syketh/with many a sory thought
He gothe/& getteth him a knedyng trough
And after a tubbe, and a kemelyn
And pryuely he sent hem to his in
And hynge hem in the rofe ful pryuely
His owne honde/he made him ladders thre
To clymben by the ronges/& by the stalkes
Into the tubbes hongyng by the balkes
And hem vitayled/bothe trough and tubbe
With breed and chese/& good ale in a tubbe
Suffisyng right ynowe/as for a day
But er that he had made al this array
He sent his knaue/and eke his wenche also
Upon his nede to London for to go
And on the monday/ whan it drowe to nyght
He shette his doore/without candel lyght
And dressed al thyng/ as it shulde be
And shortly clomben vp al thre
They seten styll not fully a forlonge way
Nowe pater noster cloun/sayd Nycolay
And clun qd Johan/& clun said Alyson
This carpenter said his deuocion
And styl he sytte/and byddeth his prayere
Awaytyng on the rayne/ if he it here.
The dede slepe/for wery besynesse
Fel on this carpenter/ right as I gesse
Aboute curfewe tyme/or lytel more
For trauayle of his goste he groneth sore
And eyle he routeth/for his heed myslay
And doun of ỹ ladder thā stalketh Nycholay
And Alyson ful soste after she spedde
Without wordes mo they went to bedde
There as the carpenter was woned to lye
There was the revel/and the melodye
And thus lyeth Alyson and Nycholas
In besynesse of myrthe and solas
Tyl that the bel of laudes gan to synge
And freres in the chaunsel gon to synge.
This parissh clerke/this amerous Absolon
That is for loue alway so wo bygon
Upon the monday was at Oseney
With company/ him to dispacte and play
And asked vpon a case a cloisterere
Ful pryuely/ after John the carpenterere
And he drewe him a parte out of the cherche
And sayd I not: I sawe him nat here wurche
Sythe saturday/I trowe that he be went
For tymbre/ there our Abbot hath him sent
For he is wont for tymbre for to go
And dwellen at the Grange a day or two
Or elis he is at his house certayne
Where that he be/I can nat sothly sayne.
This Absolon/ full ioly was and lyght
And thought/nowe is my tyme to wasshe a bought
For sothely/I sawe him nat stirryng
About his doore/sith day began to springe
So mote I thryue/ I shall at cockes crowe
Ful pryuely knocke at his Wyndowe
That stant ful lowe vpon his bowres Walle
To Alyson wol I nowe tellen all
My loue longyng: for yet I shal nat mysse
That at the leest Way I shal her kysse
Some manere comforte shal I haue parfaye
My mouthe hath itched al this longe day
That is a signe of kyssyng at the leest
Al nyght me mette eke/ that I Was at a feest
Therfore I Wol go slepe an houre or twey
And al the night than wol I walke & pley.
Whan that the first cocke hath crowe anon
Up ryseth this ioly louer Absolon
And him arayeth gay/ and ỹ pryncipal
But first he cheweth grevnes and lycorice
To smellen sote/or he had kempt his here
Under his tonge a trucloue he bere
For therby he wende to ben gracious
He roameth to the carpenters house
And styl he stante vnder the shot wyndowe
Unto his brest it raught/it was so lowe
And softe he knocked/ with a semely soun.
What do ye honycombe/swete Alysoun?
My fayre bryde/my swete cynamome
Awaketh lemman myn/and speketh to me
Ful lyttel thynken ye vpon my wo
That for your loue I swelte and swete
No wonder is though I swelte and swete
I mourne as doth the lambe after the tete
Iwys lemman/I haue swich loue longyng
That lyke a turtle trewe is my mourning
I may

I may not eaten no more than may a mayde
Go fro the wyndowe Jacke fooke/ she sayde
As helpe me god and swete sayncte Jame
I loue a mother/ or ells I were to blame
Wel bet than the (by Jesu) Absolon
Go forthe thy way/ or I wol caste a ston
And let me slepe/ a twenty deuel way.
¶ Alas quod Absolon/ and wela way
That trewe loue was euer so yuel bysette
Than bysse me/ syn it may be no bette
For Jesus loue/ and for the loue of me.
Wylt thou thā go thy way therwith qđ she?
¶ Ye certes lemman/ quod this Absolon
Than make the redy/ (quod she) I come anon
And vnto Nycholas she said stylle
Now peace/ and thou shalt laughe thy fylle
This Absolon doun set him vpō his knees
And sayde: I am a lorde at al degrees
For after this/ I hope there cometh more
Lemman thy grace/ & swete bryde thy more.
The wyndowe she vndothe/ & that in haste
Haue do (quod she) and spede the faste
Let not our neyghbours the aspye.
This Absolon gan wype his mouth ful drye
Derke was the nyght/ as pytche or cole
And at the wyndowe she put out her ers hole
And Absolon him fette/ neyther bet ne werse
But with his mouthe he kyste her bare ers
Ful sauerly/ or he were ware of this.
Abacke he sterte/ & thought it was amys
For wel he wyste/ a woman hath no berde
He felte a thyng al rough/ and long herde
And sayde: fye/ alas what haue I do?
¶ Te he quod she/ & clapte the wyndowe to
And Absolon gothe forthe a fayre pase
A berde a berde/ sayd hende Nycholas
By goddes corpus/ this gothe fayre & well.
This sely Absolon herde al euery dele
And on his lyppe he gan for angre byte
And to him selue he sayde/ I shal the quyte.
Who rubbeth now/ who frotteth now his lyps
With dust/ with sonde/ with straw/ with chyps
But Absolon: that sayth ful ofte ryght alas
My soule betake I to Sathanas
But me were leuer than al this toune/ quod he
Of this dispyte auenged for to be.
¶ Alas (quod he) alas I ne had espyed
His hotte loue is colde/ and al queynt

For fro the tyme that he had kyste her ers
Of paramours he set not a pers
For he was healed of his maladye
Ful ofte paramoures he gan defye
And wepe as doth a chylde that is ybete
A softe pace he wente ouer the strete
Vnto a smythe/ men called dan Gerueys
That in his forge smyteth plowe harneys
He sharpeth shares/ and cultres besyly
This Absolon knocketh al esily
And said vnto Gerueys/ and that anon
¶ What who arte thou? I am I Absolon
What Absolon/ what for Cristes swete tre
Why ryse ye so rathe? ey benedicite
What eyleth you? some gay gyrle god it wote
Hath brought you thus on the berytote
By saynte note/ ye wote wel what I mene.
¶ This Absolon ne raught not a bene
Of al his play/ no worde agayne he gaffe
He had more to we on his distaffe
Than Gerueys knewe/ & said frende so dere
The hote cultre/ in the chymeney here
As lene it me/ I haue therwith to done
I wol bring it the agayne ful sone.
¶ Gerueys answerde: certes were it golde
Or ony a pole nobles al vntolde
Thou shuldest it haue/ as I am trewe smyth
Eye cristes foote/ what wol ye done therwith?
Therof (quod Absolon) be as be may
I shal wel tellen the by to morowe day
And caught the cultre by the colde stele
Ful softe out at the dore gan he stele
And went vnto the carpenters wall
He roughed first/ & knocked therwithall
Vpon the wyndowe/ right as he dyd ere.
¶ This Alyson answerde: Who is there
That knocketh so? I warante he is a thefe.
Why nay (quod he) god wot my swete lefe
I am thyn Absolon/ thyn owne derlyng
Of golde (quod he) I haue the brought a ryng
My mother gaue it me/ so god me saue
Ful fyne it is/ and therto wel ygrawe
This wol I yeue the/ if thou me kysse.
This Nycholas was ryssen for to pysse
And thought he wolde amenden al the iape
He shulde kysse his ers er that he skape
And by the wyndowe dyd he hastely
And out his ers he put ful prively

And

And ouer the buttocke/to the haunche boon
And therwith spake this clerke/ this Absolon
Speke swete birde/ I not where thou arte.
¶ This Nycholas anon let fleen a farte
As great as it had ben a thunder dint
That with the stroke he was wel nyghe yblent
And he was redy with his yren hote
And Nycholas in the arse he smote.
Of gothe the skyn an hondbrede about
The hotte cultour brende so his toute
And for the smerte he wende for to dye
As he were woode/he gan for to crye
Helpe/water/water/for goddes herte
This carpenter out of his slomber sterte
And herde one crye water/as he were woode
And thought/alas nowe cometh Noes floode
And sette him vp without wordes mo
And with an axe/he smote the corde a two
And downe gothe al/he fonde neyther to sell
Breed ne ale/but downe shortly he fell
Vpon the flore/and there a swowne he lay.
¶ Vp sterte thay Alyson & hende Nycholay
And cryed out/and harrow in the strete
The neyghbours/ bothe small and grete
In ronne/for to gauren on this man
That a swoune lay/pale yfshe and wan
For with that fall brosten hath he his arme
But stonden he muste vnto his owne harme
For whan he spake/he was vboone adoun
With hende Nycholas/and Alisoun
They tolde euery man/that he was woode
He was agaste so of Noes floode
Throughe fantasye/that of his vanyte
He had getten him vnedyng tubbes thre
And had hem honged in the rose aboue
And that he prayed hem for goddes loue
To sytten in the roofe par compayne
The folke gan laughen at his fantasye
And in to the roofe they lyken and they gape
And turned al his ernest in to a iape
For what so this carpenter answerde
It was for naught/ no man his reason herde
With othes great/he was yswore adowne
That he was holden woode in al that towne
For euerych clerke anon helde with other
They sayd y man was wood/my leue brother
And euery wyght gan laughen at this stryf.
¶ Thus swyned was the carpenters wyfe
For al his kepyng/and his ialousye
And Absolon hath kyst her nether eye
And Nicholas is shaued in the toute
This tale is done/& god saue al the route.

¶ Here endeth the Mylners tale: and hereafter folowyth the Reues prologue.

Hay folke had laughed at this nyce caas
Of Absolon and hende Nycolas
Dyuers folke dyuersly they sayde
But for the more parte they loughe & playde
Ne at this tale I sawe no man hym greue
But it were onely Dan wolde the reue
Vpcause he was of carpenters craste
A lytel pre in his herte plaste
He gan to grutchen and blamen it a lyte
Sothly quod he/ful wel couthe I the quyte
With bleryng of a proude mylners eye
If that me lyst to speke of rybaudrye
But ek I am olde/me lust not play for age
Grasse tyme is done/my fodder is forage
This whyte toppe writeth myn olde yeres
For sothyme folowe was/ nowe white ben myne
But yet I fare as doth an open ers (heres
That ylke fruite is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotten in mokkoke/or in stre
We olde men/ I drede so fare we
Tyl we be rotten can we not be rype
We hopen alway/ while the world wol pype
For in our wyl there stycketh euer a nayle
To haue an hoor herd and a grene tayle
As hath a leke/for though our might be gone
Our wyl desyreth folye euer in one
For whā we may not don/thā wol we spellen
yet in our asshen olde/is fyre yreken.
¶ Lo what gledes han we/ whyle I shal deuyse
Agamityng/lyeng/angre/and couetyse
These foure sparkles longen vnto elde
Our olde lymmes mowe wel ben vnwelde
But wyl ne shal not fayle/that is soothe
And yet haue I alway a coltes toothe
As many a yere as it is passed henne
Syn that my tappe of lyfe began to renne
For sikerly/whan I was borne anone

Dethe

The Reues prologue.

Dethe dowue the tappe of hyse/ and set it gone
And euer fyus hath the tappe prouue
Dyl that almoſt al empty is the towne
The ſtreme of life nowe droppeth on ꝑ chimbe
The ſily tonge may wel ringe and clymbe
Of wretchednesse/ that paſſed is ful pore
With olde folke ſame dotage is no more.
¶ Whan ꝑ our hoſt had herde this ſermoning
He gan to ſpeke as lordly as a king
And ſaide: What amounteth al this Wytte?
What ſhal we ſpeke al day of holy writte?
The dyuel made a Reue to preche
Or a fouter a ſhypman/ or a leche.
Say ſouthe thy tale/ and tary nat the tyme
Lo Depforde/ and it is halfe way pryme
Lo Grenwyche/ that many a ſhrewe is in
It were tyme thy tale for to begyn
¶ Nowe ſire quod this Oſwolde the Reue
I pray you al/ that ye not you greue
That I anſwere/ and ſomdele ſet his houſe
For leful it is with force/ force of houſe
This dronken myller hath ptolde ba here
How we that begyled was a carpentere
Paraunenture in ſkorne/ for I am one
And by your leaue/ I ſhal him quite anone
Right in his chorles termes wol I ſpeke
I pray to god his nekke mote breke
He can wel in myn eye ſene a ſtalke
But in his owne he can not ſene a balke.

¶ Here endeth the Reues prologue.

¶ Here begynneth the Reues tale.

AT Trompyton/ not far fro Cãbridge
Ther gothe a broke/ and ouer that a bridge
Upon ꝑ whiche broke there ſtant a mell
And this is very ſothe/ as I you tell
A miller was there dwellyng many a day
As any peroche he was proude and gay
Pypen he couthe/ and fyſſhen/ and nettes bete
And turne cuppes/ and wel wraſtle and ſhete
Ape by his belte he bare a longe panade
And of a ſwerde ful trenchaut was the blade
A ioly poperer bare he in his pouche
Ther was no man for peryll durſt him touche
A Sheffelde thwytel bare he in his hoſe
Roũde

Rounde was his face/ & camyssed was his nose
As pylled as any ape was his skull
He was a market beater at the full
There durst no wyght handle on him ledge
But he ne swore he shulde abedge
A theef he was for sothe/ of corne and mele
And that a slye/and usaunt for to stele
His name was hoten deynous Symkyn
A wyfe he had/comen of noble kyn
The parson of the towne her father was
With her he yaf ful many a pounde of bras
For that Symkyn shulde in his blode alye
She was yfostred in a nonnerye
For Symkyn wolde no wyfe/as he sayde
But she were wel ynourissched/and a mayde
To saven his astate of yomanrye
And she was proude/and pert as a pye
A ful fayre syght was it vpon hem two
On holy dayes byfore the wolde he go
With his typet wounden aboute his heed
And she come after in a gyte of reed
And Symkyn had hosen of the same
There durst no wyght clepen her but dame
Was none so hardy that wolde bye the way
That with her ones durst rage or play
But if he wolde be slayne of Symkyn
With pauade/or with knyfe/or bodkyn
For ielous folkes ben perillous euermo
Algates they wolde her wyues wende so
And eke for she was somdele smoterlyche
She was as dygne as water in a dyche
And as ful of hoker/and of besmare
As thoughe that a lady shulde her spare
What for her kyndred/and her norriture
For she had lerned in the nonnerye.
A doughter had they byt wyxt hem two
Of twenty yere/withouten any mo
Sauyng a chylde ỹ was of halfe yere of age
In cradell it lay/and was a propre page
This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was
With camyssed nose/and eyen gray as glas
With buttockes brode/ & brestes rounde & hye
But right fayre was her heare/I wol not lye
The parson of ỹ toWn/for she was his heyre
In purpose Was to maken her his heyre
Bothe of his catell/and his mesnage
And straunge he made it of her mariage
His purpose was to bestowen her hye
Into some worthy blode of auncetry
For holy churches good must ben despended
On holy churches blode that is descended
Therfore he wolde/his holy blode honour
Though that he holy churche shulde devour.
¶ Great soken hath this Wyller out of dout
Wyth whete and malte/ of al the londe about
And namely there was a great college
Wher clepen it the Soler hall of Cambrige
There was her whete/ & eke her malt ygrounde
And on a day it happed in a stounde
Sicke lay the Maunciple/on a maladye
Wher wenden verely that he shulde dye
For which this myller stale both whete & eke
An hundred tyme more than before
For there before/he stale but curtesly
But nowe he was a theef outrageously
For which the warden chydde and made fare
But therof sette the Wyller nat a tare
He craked/boosted/ and swore it nas nat so
Than were there yonge poore scholers two
That dwelten in the hall/ of whiche I say
Testif they were/ and lusty for to play
And onely for her mynthe/and her solace
Upon the warden besily they prye
To yeue hem leaue/ but a lytel stounde
To gon to mylle/to seen her corne ygrounde
And hardely they durst lay her nekke
The myller shuld not stealen hem halfe a pekke
Of corne by sleyght/ne by force hem reve.
And at the last the warden yaue hem leue
Johan hyght that one/ & Aleyn hight ỹ other
Of o toWn they were both/ ỹ hyght Strother
Farre in the northe/can I not tel where.
This Aleyn maketh al redy his gere
And on a horse/the sacke he caste anon
Forthe gothe Aleyn the clerke/and also Johan
With good swerde & bokeler by her syde
Johan knewe the way/hem needeth no gyde
And at the mylle doun the sacke downe he layth
¶ Aleyn spake first: allayte Symkin in fayth
Hawe fares thy fayre doughter/ & thy wyfe?
Aleyn welcom (quod Symkin) by my lyfe
And Johan also: how now what do ye here?
By god Symkin (quod Johan) nede has no pere
Hym behoueth serue hym selfe ỹ has no swayn

Dis-

Dis he in a sole/ as clerkes sayne
Our Malmsyle I hope he wyl be deed
Two werkes ere the mangers ny hus heed
And therfore in I romet/ and ete Aleyne
To gryndē our corne & carry it home ageyne
We pray you spede hē home ny that ye may
¶ It shalbe done/ quod Symekin/ be my fey
What wol ye doon/ whyle it is in hande
By god/ right by the hopper wol I stande
Dō Johan/ I say holde gaten the corne goth in
Yet saw I neuer by my fathes kyn
How that the hopper waggeth to and fra

Aleyne enswerede Johan/ wyltow fa
Thā wol I se betymes by my moder
And se how the mele falles ouer the nether
Vpon the troughe/ that shalte my disporte
Dō Johan/ in fay I may ben out of your sorte
I am ek a millere as is ye.

¶ This Millere smyleth at her nyce
And thought al upo hem but for a wyse
They wene that no man may hem begyle
But by my thryfte/ yet shal I beren hem wyle
For al the sleyghte in her philosophye
The more wol I stele/ when I take
In stede of flour yet wol I yeue hem barme
The greatest clerkes ben not the wysest men
As whilom to the wolfe spake the Mare
Of al her arte counte I not a tare.

¶ Out at the dore he gothe ful priuely
When that he saw his time/ softely
He lokede dōwne/ til he had founde
The clerkes horse/ there as he stode vnbounde
Behynde the Mylle/ vnder a lefsel
And to the house he gothe him fayre and wel
He stryppeth of the bridel ryght anon.

And when the horse was loos/ he gan to gon
Toward the fen/ there wylde mares ryne
And forth/ with wehe/ through thicke & thynne
The myller gothe agayne/ no worde he sayde
But doth his note/ & with these clerkes playde
Tyl that her corne was faren & wel ygrounde
And when the meale was sacked & vbounde
This Johan gothe out/ & fonde her horse away
And gan to crye/ harow & wel away
Our horse is lost Aleyne for goddes bones
Stoppe on thy fete man/ come forth al at ones

Alas our wardeyn has his palfray loone.
¶ This Aleyn al forgate his sorowe & his corne
Al was out of mynde his husbondrye
What/ whyder way is he gon? he gan to crye.
The wyfe came lepyng in warde at a stert
She sayd alas/ he gothe to the ferne
With wylde mares/ as faste as he may go
Now is he come ay his bonde/ þ bonde him so
And he þ hatter shulde have wyst the wyte.

Alas ek Johan/ Aleyn for Cristes peyne
Lep dowue thy horse/ & I shal myn aswa
I is ful wyfte god wate as is a ra
By goddes sale he shal not skape vs bathe?
Why ne haddest thou put the capel in þ lathe?
Ik heyte Aleyn by god thou is a fonne.
¶ These sely clerkes han ful faste pronne
Toward the ferne/ Aleyn and eke John
And when the myller sawe þ they were agon
He halsed a bussbek of her flour hath take
And bade his wyfe bede it in a bake
He sayd/ I trowe the clerkes were a ferde
yet can a myller make a clerkes berde
For al her arte/ yet let hem gon her way
Lo where they gon/ let the children play
They get him not so lightly by my crowne.

These sely clerkes rennen vp and downe
With bepe bepe/ wassa Wardeyneere
Ga whystle thou/ and I shal bepe him here
But shortly/ tyll it was verey nyght
They couth not/ though they dyd al her might
Her capel catche/ he ran away so faste
Tyl in a dyche they caught him at the laste.
¶ Wery and wete/ as beestes in the rayne
Cometh sely Johan/ & with him cometh Aleyn
Alas (quod Johan) the day that I was borne
Now are we brimen to hethen and to scorne
Our corne is stole/ men wol vs fooles call
Bothe the wardeyn/ and our felowes all
And namely the myller/ wa the way
Thus playneth Johan/ as he gothe by þ way
Toward the mylle/ & bayarde in his hande
The myller sitteth vp the fyre he fonde
For it was night/ & ferther might they naught
But for the loue of god they him besought
Of herbergh and ese/ as for her peny.
¶ The myller sayd opon/ if ther be eny
Swyche as it is/ yet shal ye haue your parte

My house is strayte/but ye haue lerned arte
Ye can by argument make a place
A myle brode/ of twenty foote of space
Let se now we if this place may suffyse
Or make it rowmer w' speche/ as is your gyse
Now Symond (said Johan) by saint Cutberde
Aye is thou merry/ & that is sayre answerde
I haue herd say/ men should take of twa thinges
Swylke as he fyndes or swylke as he bringes
But specially I pray the hoste here
Get vs some meate & drinke/ & make vs chere
And we wyl pay trewly at the full
With empty honde/ men may no hawkes tull
Lo here our syluer redy for to spende.
The myller to the towne his doughter sende
For ale and breed/ and rosted hem a goose
And bouide her hote he shuld no more go loose
And in his owne chambre he made a bedde
With sheres & with thalomi fayre yspredde
Not from his owne bedde/ tay fote or twelue
His doughter had a bedde al by her selue
Right in the same chambre/ by and by
It myght be no bette/ and the cause why.
Ther was no roumer herbo we in ye place.
They soupen/ & they spekyn of myrth & solace
And dronken ever strong ale at beste
Aboute mydnyght went they to reste.
Wel hath this myller vernysshed his heed
Ful pale he was for dronken/ & nothyng red
He gaspeth/ & he spetteth thrugh his nose
As he were in the quarke/ or in the pose
To bedde he gothe/ and with him his wyfe
As any Jay was she lyght and mlyfe
So was her ioly whystell wel ywette
The cradell at the bedden fete was sette
To rocken/ & to yeue the chylde to souke
And whan ye dronken wife al in the crouke
To bedde went the doughter right anon
To bedde gothe Alleyn and eke Johan
There nas no more/ hem neded no drinke
This myller hath so wisely bybbed ale
That as an horse he snorteth in his slepe
Ne of his tayle behynde he toke no kepe
His wyfe bare to him a bordon wel strong
Men myght hem here route a furlonge
The wenche routeth eke par compayne.
Alleyn the clerke/ that herde this melody
He poked on Johan/ & sayd; slepest thou?
Herdest thou ever swylke a songer nowe?
Lo swylke a rowpyng is yewy yet hem alle
A wylde fyre on her bodyes falle.
Who herde ever swylke a ferly thynge
Ye/ they shal haue the floures of yuel endyng
All this longe nyght tydes me no reste
But yet nafors al shal be for the beste
For Johan (sayd he) as ever mote I thryue
If that I may/ yon wenche wel I swyue
Some esement hath lawe shapen me
For Johan/ there is a lawe that sayth thus
That if a man in one pryuate betyd a grefe
That in an other he shal be releued
Our corne is stolne/ soothly it is no nay
And we haue had an yuel fyt to day
And sythen I shal haue none amendement
Agayne my losse I wyl haue myn esement
By goddes sale/ he shal none other be.
This Johan answerde: Alleyn/ sayre the
The myller is a perilous man/ he sayde
And if that he out of his slepe abrayde
He myght doen vs bathe a vilonye.
Alleyn answerd: I counte him not worth a fly
And vp he ryseth/ and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche lay vpright/ and fast slept
Ere he so nye wan/ er she myght aspye
That it had ben to late for to crye
And shortly for to sayne/ they were al on
Now wel play Alleyn/ for I wol speke of Johan.
This Johan lay stylle a furlonge way or two
And to him selfe he maketh routh and woo
Alas (quod he) this is a wicked iape
Now we may I say/ I is but an ape
yet hath my felowe somwhat for his harme
He hath the millers doughter in his armne
He auntreth him/ and hath his nede yspedde
And I lye as a beaste alone in my bedde
And whan this iape is tolde a nother day
I shal be holde a daffe/ or a cokenay
I wol aryse/ and auntre me it by my fay
Vnhardy is vnfely/ thus men say.
And vp he roos/ and softely he wente
Vnto the cradell/ and in his armne it hente
And bare it softly to his beddes fete
Some after the wyfe her rowtyng lete
And gan awake/ and wente her out to pysse
And

And came ageyn/& gan the cradell myssе
And groped here & there/but she fonde none
Alas (quod she) I had almoste mysgone
I had almost gone to the clerkes bedde
Eye benedycite/than had I fonde yspedde
And forthe she gothe/tyll she the cradel fonde
She gropeth alway further with her honde
And fonde the bedde/& thought nat but good
Because that the cradel by it stode
And nyste where she was/for it was derke
But sayde a wel she crepte in by the clerke
And lyeth ful styl/& wold haue caught a slepe
Within a whyle this Iohan the clerke vp lepe
And on the good wyfe he layde ful sore
So merry a fyt had she nought ful yore
And pleyed harde & depe/as he were madde
Thus ioly lyfe haue these two clerkes ladde
Tyll that the thirde cocke began to synge.
Alcyn waxe wery in the dawenyng
For he had wonnen al the longe nyght
And sayd/farwel Malyn swete wyght
The day is come/I may no longer byde
But euermo/where so I go or ryde
I am thyn owne clerke/so haue I hele.
Now dere lemman (quod she) go/farwele
But or thou go/one thyng I wil the tell
Whan thou wendest forth ward by the Mell
Right at the entre of the broke behynde
Thou shalt a cake of barlye a busshel fynde
That was ymaked of thyn owne mele
Whiche that I helpe my syre to stele
And good lemman god the sende good spede
And with ỳ worde she gan almoste to wepe.
Alcyn vpstert/and thought ex al dawe
He wolde go crepen in by his felawe
And fonde the cradel with his honde anon
By god thought he/al wrong haue I gon
My herd is totty of my swynke to nyght
That maketh me that I go not aryght
I wot wel that by ỳ cradel I haue myssе go
Here lyeth the Myller and his wyfe also
And forthe he gothe an twenty deuel way
Vnto the bedde/there as the myller lay
He wende haue crepen by his felawe Iohn
And by the myllers he crepte in anon
And caught him by the nekke/& soft he spoke
And sayd: Iohan/thou swynerdes owne

For Cristes sowle/and here a noble game
For by that lorde/that called is saynt Iame
As I haue thryse in this shorte nyght
Swyued the myllers doughter bolte vpright
Whyles thou hast/as a coward dest agaste.
Ye false harlot (quod the myller) haste
A false traytour/false clerke (quod he)
Thou shalte be dede by goddes dignyte
Who durste be so bolde to disparage
Thy doughter/that is come of suche lynage
And by the throte bolle he caught Alayn
And he him hente despytously agayn
And on the nose he smote him with his fest
Doune ran the bloode streme vpon his brest
And in the floor/with mouthe & nose plodde
They walowe/as dothe pygges in a podde
And vp they gon/and doune ayen anone
Tyll that the myller spurnde on a stone
And doune he fyl backwarde vpon his wyfe
That wyste nothyng of this nyce stryfe
For she was fal a slepe a lytel wyght
With Iohan the clerke/ỳ waked had al nyght
And with the fall out of her slepe she braydе
Helpe holy crosse of Stemfolme she sayde
In manus tuas/lorde to the I calle
Awake Symonde/the feende is on me falle
My herte is broken/helpe I am but dede
There lyeth one on my wombe & on my hede
Helpe Symkyn/for these false clerkes fyghte
This Iohn sterte vp/as fast as euer he myght
And graspeth by the walles to and fro
To fynde a staffe/and she sterte vp also
And knewe the estres bet than dyd this Iohn
And by the wal she founde a staffe anon
And sawe a lytel shemering of a lyght
For at an hole in shone the moone bright
And by that lyght she sawe them both the two
But sykerly she nyste who was who
But as she sey a whyte thyng in her eye
And whan she gan this whyte thyng aspye
She wende the clerke had wered a voluper
And with ỳ staffe she drowe alway ner & ner
And wende haue hyt this Alcyn at full
And smote the myller on the pylled skull
That doune he gothe/& cryed/harrow I dye
These clerkes beate him wel/and let him lye
And graspeth him/and tooke her horse anon

And eke her wroke/ and on her way they goo
And at the mylle dore they tooke her ooke
Of halfe a bushel flour/wel ybake.
Thus is the proude myller wel ybete
And hath ylost the grynding of the whete
And payde for the supper euerydele
Of Aleyn and of Iohan/that bete him wele
His wyfe is swyued/and his doughter also
Lo suche it is a Myller to be falo
And therfore this prouerbe is ful sothe
Hym darf not wel wene that yuel dothe
A gylour shal him selfe begyled be
And god that syte hye in maiesie
Saue al this company/great and smale
Thus haue I quyt the myller in his tale.

Here endeth the Reues tale/
and here foloweth the
Cokes prologue.

The Cooke of London/whyle ỹ Reue spake
For ioy him thought he claude him on ỹ backe
A ha (quod he) for Chuistes passyon
This myller hath a sharpe conclusyon
Vpon his argument of herbygage
Wel said Salomon in his langage
Ne bring not euery man in to thyn houe
For herbowyng by nyght is perelous
Wel ought a man auysed for to be
Whom that he brought in to his priuete
I pray to god so yeue me sorowe and care
If euer syther I hyght Hodge of Ware
Herde I myller bette pfette a werke
He had a iape of malyce in the derke.
But god forbyd that we stynten here
And therfore if ye Southe sayse to here
A tale of me/that am a poore man
I wol you tel as wel as I can
A lytel iape/that fel in our cyte.
Our hoste sayd/sir I graunte it the
Nowe tel on Rodger/loke that it be good
For many a pasty haste thou letten blode
And many a Iacke of Douer hast thou solde
That hath be twyse hotte and twyse colde
Of many a pylgryym hast thou Chuistes curse
For of thy parsle yet fare they the worse
That they haue eaten with thy stobel goos
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos
Nowe tel on gentle Rogere by thy name
But yet I pray the be not wrothe for game
A man may say ful sothe in game & play.
Thou sayst ful soth (qd Roger) by my fay
But soth play/quade play/as ỹ flemig saith
And therfore Henry Bayliy by thy fayth
Be thou not wrothe/or we departen here
Though that my tale be of an hostelere
But natheleese/I wol not telleu it yet
But er we parte/ywys thou shalte be wrete
And therwithal he lough and made chere
And sayd his tale/as ye shullen after here.

Here endeth the Cokes pro-
logue / and here fo-
loweth his tale.

A Prentise whilom dwelte in our cyte
And of the craste of Bitaylers was he
Galiard he was/as goldfinch in ye shaw
Broune as a berye/a proper shorte felawe
With lockes blacke/kempt full fetously
Daunce he couthe full wel and iolily
He was called Perkyn Reuelour
He was as full of loue and paramour
As is the hyue full of hony swete
Wel was the wenche with hym might mete
At euery bridal wolde he syng and hoppe
He loued bette the tauernes than the shoppe
For whan any ridyng was in chepe
Out of the shoppe thider wolde he lepe
Tyl that he had al the sight yseyn
And daunced wel/he wolde not come ageyn
And gather hym a meyny of his sorte
To hop and syng/and make suche disporte
And there they sette steuyn for to mete
To playen at the dise in suche a strete
For in the cyte nas there no prentise
That sayre couthe caste a paire of dise
Than Perkyn couthe/and therto he was free
Of his despense/in place of pouere
That founde his maister wele in his chaffare
For oftymes he founde his boye ful bare
For syker/a prentise reuelour
That haunteth dise/riotte/or paramour
His maister shal it in his shoppe abye
Al haue he no parte of the mynstralcy
For theste and riotte/they ben conuertible
Al can he play on gyttron or on tibible
Reuel and trouthe/as in lowe degre
They ben ful wrothe al day/as men may se
This ioly prentise/with his maister abode
Tyl he were nye out of his prentishode
Al were he swybbed bothe early and late
And somtyme ledde with reuel to Newgate
But at the last/his maister him bethought
Upon a day/whan he his paper sought
Of a prouerbe/that saith this same worde
Wel bette is rotten apple out of horde
Than that it rote al the remenaunt
So fareth it by a riottous seruaunt
It is moche lesse harme to let him passe
Than he shende al the seruauntes in the place
Therfore his maister gaue hym a quitaunce
And badde him go/with sorowe & myschaunce
And thus this ioly prentise had his leue
Nowe lette hym riot al the nyght or leue

And for there is no theef without a louke
That helpeth him to wasie or to souke
Of that he bruke can/or borow we may
Anon he sent his bedde and his array
Vnto a compere of his owne sorte
That loued dyce/revel/and disporte
And had a wyfe/that helde for countenaunce
A shoppe/and swpued for her sustenaunce.

¶ Here endeth the Cokes tale/
and here folowe the man
of lawes prologue.

Vr hoste sawe wel/that the brighte sonne
The arke of his artificial day hath ronne
The fourthe parte/and halfe an hour more
And though he were not depe expert in lore
He wyste it was the eyghtene day
Of Aprile/that is the messanger to May
And sawe wel/that the shadowe of euery tre
Was as in lengthe/the same quantyte
As was the body erecte/that caused it
And therfore by the shadowe he tooke his wyt
That Phebus/whiche ꝑ shone clere and bright
Degrees was fourty clomben of hyght
And for that daye/as in latytude
It was ten of the clocke/he gan conclude
And sodaynly he plyght his horse aboute.
¶ Lordynges (qꝺ he) I warne you al ꝑ route
The fourthe parte of this day is gon
Now for the loue of god and of saynt Johñ
Leseth no tyme/as ferforth as ye may
Lordynges the tyme wasteth both nyght and day
And stealeth from vs/what prively slepyng
And what through negligẽce in our wakyng
As doth the stremc/that turneth neuer agayn
Discendyng fro the mountayne in to ꝑ playn
Wel can Senecke/and many a philosofre
By wayling tyme/more than golde in cofre
For losse of catel may recouered be
But losse of tyme shendeth vs (quod he)
It wol not come ayen without any drede
No more than wol Assyres maydenhede
Whan she hath lefte it in her wantonnesse
Let vs not mowlen thus in ydelnesse.
Syr man of lawe (quod he) so haue I blys
Tel vs a tale anon/as forwarde as
ye ben submytted/through your fre assent
To stonden in this case at my iudgement
Acquyteth you nowe of your behestc
Than haue ye done your deuer at the leste.
¶ Hoste (quod he) de pardeux ieo assent
To breke forwarde is not myn entent
Vpheste is dette/and I wol holde fayne
Al my behest. I can no better fayne
For such lawe as a mã preueth an other wight
He shulde hym selue vsen it by ryght
Thus wol our text: But natheles certayne
I can right nowe no thrifty tale sayne
That Chaucer (though he can but lewdly
On metres and in rymyng crastely)
Hath sayd hem/in suche englyssh as he can
Of olde tyme/as knowen many a man
And if he haue not sayd hem leue brother
In one bokc/he hath sayd hem in a nother
For he hath tolde of louers vp and down
Mo than Ouyde made of mencioun
In his epystles/that ben ful olde
What shuld I telle hem/sythen they ben tolde
In youthe he made of gyle al a lone
And sythen he hath spoken of euerychone
These noble wyues/and these louers eke
Who so that wol his large volume seke
Cleped the saynctes lyues of Cupyde
There may he se the large woundes wyde
Of Lucresse/and of Babylon Thisbe
The swerde of Dydo for the falsc Ence
The tre of Phillis for her Demophoon
The playnte of Dianire/and of Hermyon
Of Ariadna/and of Hypsipbiler
The barayne ylc stondyng in the see
That dreynte Leandre for his hero
The teares of Helayn/and eke the wo
Of Brseis/and of Laodomya
The cruelte of quene Medea
The lytel chaldren hongyng by the hals
For the Jason/that was of louc so fals
Of Hypermistra/Penelope/and Alceste
Your wyfhode he comendeth with the beste
But certaynly no worde ne writeth he
Of thylke wycked ensample of Canace
That loued her owne brother synfully
Of suche cursed stories I sey fy
Vpon hem alle Appollonius

Howe

Howe that the cursed kyng Antyochus
Dyuaste his doughter of her maydenhede
That is so horrible a tale for to rede
Whan he her dide vpon the pauement
And therfore he of ful auisement
Nolde neuer wite ny non of his sermons
Of suche lewde and vnpure abhominations
Ne I ne wol non reherce/ yef that I may
But of my tale how we shal I don this day
Me were lothe be lyeued doutles
To Muse/ that men clepe Pyrides
Methamorphoseos wotte what I mene
But natheles I recche not a bene
Though I come after him with hawbake
I spede my prose/ and let him rymes make
And with that worde/ he with a sobre chere
Began his tale/ as ye shullen after here.

¶ Here endeth the man of lawes pro-
logue/ & here foloweth his tale.

O Hateful harme/ condycion of pouert
With thurst/ with colde/ with hunger so confounded
To asken helpe/ the shamest thy hert
If thou noy aske/ wt nede thou art so wounded
That verry nede vnwrapeth al thy wounde hyd
Maugre thyn herd/ thou must for indygence
Or stele/ or begge/ or borowe thy despence

Thou blamest Crist/ and sayest ful bytterly
He mysdeparteth rychesse temporell
Thy neyghbour thou wytest synfully
And sayest/ thou hast to lyttel/ & he hath all
Parfay (sayst thou) sometyme he rekened shall
Whan that his tayle shal brenne in glede
For he nought helpeth nedeful in his nede.

Herken what is the sentence of the wyse
Better is to dyen/ than to haue indygence
Thyn selfe neyghbour wol the dispyse
If thou be poure/ farwel thy reuerence
Yet of the wyse may take this sentence
Al the dayes/ poure men ben wycke
Beware therfore or thou come to the pricke

If thou be poore/ thy brother hateth the
And al thy frendes fleeth fro the/ alas
O ryche marchaunts ful of wele be ye
O noble prudent folke/ as in this cas
Your bagges ben not fylled with ambes as
But wt eyen fyue/ yt renneth for your chaffre
At Chrystemmasse/ merry may ye daunce

ye seken

¶ Ye seken londe & see for your wynynges
As wise folke ye knowen al the state
Of reignes/ ye ben fathers of tidynges
And tales/ bothe of peace and debate
I was right nowe of tales desolate
Nere that a marchaut/ goue is many a yere
He taught a tale/ whiche ye shullen here.

In Surrey whilom dwelte a company
Of chapmen rith/ and therto sad & trewe
That wyde where senten her spicery
Clothes of golde/ and satten ryche of hewe
Her chafare was so thrifty and so newe
That euery wight hath deyntie to chafare
With hem/ and eke to sellen hem her ware

Nowe fel it/ that the maisters of that sorte
Han shapen hem/ to Rome for to wende
Were it for chapmanhode/ or for disporte
Non other messagere wolde they thyder sende
But comen hem selfe to Rome/ this is ỳ ende
And in suche place as thought hem auauntage
For her entent/ they taken her herbygage

Soiourned han these marchaūtes in ỳ towne
Certayne tyme/ as fel to her plesaunce
But so byfel/ that the excellent renowne
Of the emperours doughter dame Custaūce
Reported was/ with euery circumstaunce
Vnto these surreyn marchaūtes/ in suche wise
Fro day to day/ as I shal you deuyse

¶ This was the comen voyce of euery man
Our emperour of Rome/ god him se
A doughter hath/ ỳ sythen the worlde began
To reken as wel her goodnesse as her beaute
Nas neuer suche a nother as is she
I pray to god in honour her susteene
And wolde she were of al Europe ỳ queene

In her is hye beautie/ without pride
Youthe/ without greenhede or folye
To al her werkes Vertu is her gyde
Humblesse hath slayne in her al tyrannye
She is a mirrour of al curtesye
Her herte is bery chambre of holynesse
Her honde mynistre of fredom & almesse

¶ And al this voyce was soth/ as god is trewe
But now to our purpose let vs turne agayn
These marchātes han don fraught her shyps newe
And whā they han this blyssful mayden seyn
Home to Surrey ben they went ageyn
And done her nedes/ as they han done yore
And lyuen in welth/ I can say no more.

Now fel it/ ỳ these marchātes stoden in grace
Of hym that was the Soudon of Surrye
For whā ỳ they came from any straūge place
He wolde of his benygne curtesye
Make hem good chere/ & besyly aspye
Tydynges of sondry realmes for to lere
The wonders that they might seen or here

Amonge other thynges specially (taūce
These marchātes haue hym tolde of dāe Cus-
So gret noblesse/ in ernest ceryously
That this Soudon hath cauzt so gret plesāce
To han her fygure in his remembraūnce
And al his luste/ and al his besy cure
Was for to loue her/ while his lyfe may dure

¶ Parauenture in that olde large boke
Whiche ỳ cleped is the heuen/ ywritten was
With sterres/ whan that he was borne loke
That he for loue shulde han his dethe/ alas
For in the sterres/ clerer than is the glas
Is written god wot/ who so coude it rede
The dethe of euery man withouten drede

¶ In sterres many a wynter there byfore
Was written the deth of Hector & of Achylles
Of Pompey and Julyus/ or they were bore
The stryfe of Thebes/ and of Hercules
Of Sampson/ Turnus/ and of Socrates
The dethe: but that mans wyttes ben so dull
That no wyght can wel rede it at the full

¶ This Soudon for his prime coūsayle sent
And shortly of this mater for to pace
He hath to hem declared al his entent
And said hem certain/ but if he myzt haue gra-
To haue Custaūce/ within a lytel space (ce
He nas but deed/ and charged hem to hye
To shapen for his lyfe some remedye.

Dpuers

¶ Diuers men / diuersly they sayden
The argument they casten vp and down
Many a subtill reason forthe they layden
They spoken of Magike / and abusioun
But finally / as in conclusioun
They can not seen in that non auauntage
Ne in non other way / saue in mariage.

¶ Than sawe they therin suche difficultie,
By way of reason / to speke al playne
Because that there was suche diuersite
But were her bothe lawes / that thky sayne
They trowe vnto no christen prince wolde fayne
Wedden his childe vnder our lawes swete
That vs was taught / by Mahoũde our prophete

¶ And he answerde: rather than I lese
Custaunce / I wol be christen doutles
I mote ben hers / I may non other chese
I pray you holde your argumentes in pees
Saueth my lyfe / and be not recheles
To getten her / that hath my lyfe in cure
For in this wo / I may not long endure

¶ What nedeth greatter delatation
I say / by treatie and ambassadrye
And by the popes mediation
And al the churche / and al the chevalry
That in destruction of Maumetry
And in encrease of Christes lawe dere
They ben accorded / as ye shal here.

¶ Vnto that the Soudon and his baronage
And al his lieges / shulde ichristned be
And he shal han Custaunce in mariage
And certayne golde / I not what quantite
And her to fynde sufficient surete
The same accorde was sworne on either syde
Nowe faire Custance / almighty god vnto gyde

¶ Nowe wolden some men waiten / as I gesse
That I shulde tellen al the purueyaunce
That the Emperour of his noblesse
Hath shapen for his daughter dame Custance
But many men knowen / that so grete ordinance
May no man tellen in a lyttel clause
As was arayde for so high a cause

Bisshoppes ben shapen with her for to wende
Lordes and ladies / and knightes of renowne
And other folke ynowe / this is the ende
And notified is throughout the toune
That every wight / with great deuocioun
Shulde pray Christ / that he this mariage
Receyue in gree / and spede this viage

¶ The day is come of her departyng
I say the wofal day natural is come
That there may be no lenger tarieng
But forwarde they hem dresse al and some
Custaunce / that with sorowe is al ouercome
Ful pale arist / and dresseth her to wende
For wel she see / there is non other ende

¶ Alas / what wonder is it though she wept:
That shal be sent to a straunge nation
Fro frendes / that so tenderly her kept
And to be bounden vnder subiection
Of one / she knoweth not his condition
Husbondes ben al good and han ben yore
That knowen wyues / I dare say no more

Father (she said) thy wretched childe Custãce
Thy yonge daughter / fostred vp so softe
And ye my mother / my soueraigne plesance
Ouer al thyng (out take Christ on lofte)
Custaunce your childe hir cõmaundeth ofte
Vnto your grace: for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I neuer more se you with eye

¶ Alas / vnto the Barbary nation
I muste anon / sithen it is your wyl
But Christ that starfe for our redemption
So pyne me grace / his hestes to fulfyll
I wretched woman no force though I spyll
Women are borne to thraldom and penaunce
And to ben vnder mannes gouernaunce

I trowe at Troy / whan Thurus brake the wal
Of Ilyon / ne whan Thebes cyte
Ne Rome for the harme of Hanybal
That Romayns hath mẽquersshed tymes thre
Nas herde / suche tendre wepyng for pyte
As was in the chambre for her departyng
But forth she moste / whether she wepe or syng.

D furste

¶ O firſt moryng crucl firmament
With thy deurnal ſwegh/ that croudeſt aye
And hurtleſte al fro Eſt to Occident
That naturally wolde holde another way
Thy croudyng ſet the heuen in ſuche array
At the begynnyng of this fers voyage
That cruel Mars hath ſlayne this mariage

¶ O infortunate aſſendent tortuous
Of Whiche the lorde is helpeleſſe fal/ alas
Out of his angle/ into his derkeſt houſe
O Mars/ O cruſifer/ as in this caas
O feble Mone/ vnhappy ben thy paas
Thou wrytteſt ꝑ there thou nart not reſpued
Ther thou were wel/ fro thēce art ꝑ Mayued

¶ Imprudent emperour of Rome/ alas
Was there no philoſofer in thy towne?
Is no tyme bette than other in ſuche cas?
Of voyage/ is there non eleccioune?
Namely to folke of hye condicioun
Nat whan a rote is of a bryther ſkowe
Alas we ben to leude/ or to ſlowe

¶ To ſhip is brought this woful faire mayd
Solempnely/ with euery circumſtaunce
Nowe Jeſu Chriſt be with you al (ſhe ſayd)
Ther nys no more/ but farewel faire Cuſtāce
She payneth her to make good countenance
And forthe I let her ſayle in this manere
And tourne I wol agayne to my matere.

¶ Explicit prima pars: et ſequitur pars ſecunda.

The mother of the Soudon/ wel of vices
¶ Aſpied hath her ſonnes playne entent
How he wolde lete his olde ſacrifices
And right anon/ ſhe for her counſayle ſent
And they ben comen/ to know what ſhe ment
And whan aſſembled was this folke in fere
She ſette her down/ & ſaid/ as ye ſhal here.

¶ Lordes (quod ſhe) ye know enerichone
How that my ſonne is in poynt to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron
yeuen by goddes meſſangere Machomete
But ouer ouer we to grete god I hete
The lyfe ſhal rather out of my body ſterte
Or Machomettes lawe go out of my herte

What ſhulde vs tyden of this newe lawe
But thraldome to our bodies and penaunce
And afterwarde in hel to ben drawe
For we reneyed Mahounde our creaunce?
But lordes/ wol ye make aſſuraunce
As I ſhal ſay/ aſſentyng to my lore
And I ſhal make vs ſafe for euermore

They ſworen/ and aſſenten every man
To lyue with her and dye/ and by her ſtonde
And euerich in the beſt wiſe that he can
To ſtrengthen her/ ſhal his frendes fonde
And ſhe hath this empriſe take in honde
Whiche ye ſhal here/ that I ſhal deuiſe
And to hem al ſhe ſpake in this wiſe.

We ſhul vs firſt fayne/ chriſtendom to take
Colde water ſhal not greue vs but a lyte
And I ſhal ſuche a reuel and a feeſt make
That as I trowe/ I ſhal the Soudon quite
For tho his wyfe be chriſtened neuer ſo whyte
She ſhal haue nede to waſſhe away the rede
Though ſhe a fonte ful of water wt her lede

¶ O Soudonneſſe/ rote of iniquite
Virago/ thou Semyram the ſecounde
O ſerpent vnder femenyete
Lyke to the ſerpent depe in hell ybounde
O fayned woman/ al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence/ through thy malyce
Is bredde in the/ a neſt of euery vyce.

¶ O Sathan enuyous/ ſyn thylke day
That thou were chaſed from our herytage
Wel kneweſt thou to women the olde way
Thou madeſt Eue to bring vs in ſeruage
Thou wolte ſorbone this chriſten mariage
Thyn inſtrument/ ſo wela way the whyle
Maieſt thou of wome/ whā thou wolt begyle

This

¶ This Soudonesse/whom I blame & wite
Let passen hir conysayle gon hir way
What shulde I my tale longer tarye?
She rydeth to the Soudon on a day
And sayd him/that she wolde renye her fay
And chastendom/of pryses Soudes sonne
Repentyng her/she hethen was so longe

Besechyng him/ to done her that honour
That she might haue the cristen folke to feste
To plesen hem/ I wol done my labour
The Soudon sayth/I wol do at your heste
And shortly/to make it of that requeste
So glad he was/ he wyst not what to sayn
She kyst his sonne/& home she goth her way

¶ Arryued ben these cristen folke to londe
In Surre/with a great solempne route
And hastely this Soudon sent his sonde
First to his mother/& al the reygne aboute
And sayd/his wyfe was comen out of doute
And prayden hem for to ryden ayenst ye queene
The honoure of his reygne for to susteene

Great was the prese/& ryche was the raye
Of Surreyens/ and Romayns ymette yfere
The mother of the Soudon/ryche and gay
Receyueth her with al glad chere
As any mother myght her doughter dere
Vnto the next cite there besyde
A softe pas solempnely they ryde

¶ Nought trowe I/the triumphe of Iulyus
Of whiche that Lucan maketh suche a boste
Was royaller/ and more curious
Than was thassemblyng of this blisful hoste
But this Scorpion/ this wicked goste
The sodonesse/ for al her flatterynge
Last vnder al this/ful mortally to stynge

The Soudon cometh himselfe sone after this
So ryally/that wonder is to tel
he welcometh her with moche ioye & blys
And thus in myrthe & ioy I let hem dwell
The fruyte of euery tale is for to tell
When tyme come/ men thought it for the beste
That euery wight/ and men goy to reste

¶ The tyme come/this olde Soudonesse
Ordeyned hath the feest/of whiche I tolde
And to the feest/cristen folke hem dresse
In general/ bothe ponge and olde
There may men feest and ryalte beholde
And dernere mo than I can deuyse
But al to dere they boughten it or they ryse

¶ O Soudon/ wo ye euer thou art successour
To worldly blysse/ spronge with bytternesse
The ende of ioye/of our worldly labour
Wo occupyeth the ende of our gladnesse
Herken this counsayle/ for thy sykernesse
Vpon thy glad day haue thou in mynde
The vnware wo or harm/ that cometh behynde

For shortly for to tellen at a worde
The Soudon/ and the cristen euerychone
Ben al to hewe/ & slyced at the borde
But it were onely dame Custaunce alone
This olde Soudonesse/cursed crone
Hath with her frendes don this cursed dede
For she her selfe wolde al the contree lede

Ne there was surreyen none ye was conuerted
That of the counsayle of the Soudon wot
That he nas al to hewe/er he asterted
And Custaunce han they taken anon forthot
And in a shyppe al stereneles (god wot)
They han her set/& bydden her seme to sayle
Out of Surrey ayenward to Itayle.

¶ A certayne tresour/that she thyder ladde
And sothe to sayne/vitayle great plente
They han her geuen/& clothes eke she had
And forthe she sayleth in the salte se
O my Custaunce/ful of benygnite
O emperours ponge doughter dere
He that is lorde of fortune/be thy stere.

She blesseth her/and with ful pytous voice
Vnto the crosse of Ihust/tho sayd she.
O clere/ o welful auter/ holy croice
Reed of the lambes blode/ ful of pyte
That wesshe ye worlde fro the olde iniquite
Me fro the fende/and fro his clawes kepe
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe

Vnto

¶ Victorious tree/ protection of trewe
That onely worthy Were for to bere
The kyng of heuyn/ With his woundes newe
The White lambe/ that hurt was with a spere
Flemere of feendes/ out of hym and here
On whiche thy lymmes/ faithfully extenden
Me kepe/ & yeue me myght my lyfe to amenden

¶ yeres and dayes fleteth this creature
Thyughout the see of Grece/ vnto the straytes
Of Marocke/ as it Was her auenture
O/ many a sory mele may she bayte
After her dethe ful ofte may she Wayte
Or that the Wylde wawes wolde her dryue
Vnto the place there she shulde aryue.

Men mighten aske/ why she was not slayn
Eke at the feest/ who myght her body saue:
I answere to that demaunde agayn
Who saued Danyel in that horrible caue?
There euery wyght/ were he maister or knaue
Was with the kyng wrette or he asterte
No wyght but god/ that he bare in his herte.

¶ God kyst to shewe his wonderful myracle
In her/ for she shulde sene his mighty werkes
Thrist that is to euery harme tryacle
By certayn meanes ofte/ as knowen clerkes
Do the thyng for certayn ende/ ỳ full derke is
To mans wytte/ that for our ygnoraunce
Ne can nat knowe his prudent purueyaunce

Nowe syth that she was not at ỳ feest yslawe
Who kepeth her fro the drenchyng in the see?
Who kept Jonas in the fysshes mawe
Tyl he was spouted out at Nenyue?
Wel may men knowe/ it was no wight but he
That kept the people Ebrias from drenchyng
With dry fete/ through the see passyng

Who hath the four spyrites of the tempeste
That power had/ bothe to anoye londe & see
Bothe northe and southe/ and also weste & este
Anoyeth neyther see/ ne londe/ ne tre
Soothly the cõmaunder therof was he
That fro the tempest aye this woman kepte
As wel whan she woke as whan she slepte

Wher might this womanly mete & drinke haue?
Thre yere and more/ how lasteth her vitayle?
Who fedde the Egyptian Marye in the caue
Or in deserte (none but Thrist sans fayle)
Fyue thousãde folke it was as gret marueyle
With loues fyue and fysshes two to fede
God sent his foyson at his great nede.

She dryueth forthe in to our Decian
Throughout the wylde see/ tyl at the laste
Vnder an holde/ that nempne I ne can
Fer in Northumberlonde/ the wawe her caste
And in the sande her shyppe stycked so faste
That thence nolde it not of al a tyde
The Vyl of Thrist was ỳ she shuld there byde

¶ The constable of the castel downe is fare
To seen this wrecke/ & al the shyp he sought
And fonde this wery woman ful of care
He fonde also the tresoure that she brought
In her langage/ mercy she besought
The lyfe out of her body for to twyn
Her to delyuer of wo that she was in.

¶ A maner latyn corrupte was her speche
But algates therby was she vnderstonde
The constable/ whan him lyst no lenger seche
This wofu[l] woman brought he to londe
She kneleth downe/ & thanketh goddes sonde
Vut what she was/ she wolde no man sey
For foule ne fayre/ though she shulde dey

She sayd she was so mased in the see
That she forgate her mynde/ by her trouthe
The constable of her hath so great pyte
And eke his wyfe/ that they wepen for routhe
She was so dylygent wythouten slouthe
To serue & plese euerych in that place
That al her loued/ that lo[u]en in her face

The constable/ & dame Hermegylde his wyfe
Were paynims/ and that contre euery where
But Hermegylde loued her right as her lyfe
And Custaunce hath so long sojourned there
In ouyons/ with many a bytter tere
Tyl Jesu hath conuerted through his grace
Dame Hermegylde/ & huslesse of that place.

Now

In al that londe durst no christen route
Al christen folke they fledde from that coustre
Through payenims/ that conquered al about
The plages of the North/ by londe and see
To Wales fledde the christianyte
Of olde Britons/ dwellyng in that Ile
There was her refute/ for the meane whyle

But yet nas ther neuer cristen Breton so exiled
That there nas some in her prouete
Honoured Christe/ & heathen folke begyled
And nye the castel suche there dwellen thre
That one of hem was blynde/ & myght not se
But it were with thylke eyen of his mynde
With whiche men seen/ after they ben blynde

Bright was the sonne/ as in somers day
For whiche the constable/ and his wyfe also
And Lustaunce/ han taken the right way
Toward the see/ a furlong way or two
To playen/ and to romen to and fro
And in her walke/ the blynde men they met
Crossed and olde/ with eyen faste yshette

In ỳ name of Christ/ cryed this blynd Breton
Dame Hermegylde/ yeue me syght again
This lady wax a frayde of the soun
Lest that her husbonde/ shortly for to sayne
Wold her for Jesus Christes lore haue slayne
Til Lustáce made her bolde/ & bad her werch
The wyl of Christ/ as doughter of his cherch

The constable woxe abasshed of that syght
And sayd: what amounteth al this fare?
Lustaunce answerde: sir it is Christes might
That helpeth folke out of the fendes snare
And so ferforth she gan our la we declare
That the constable/ er that it was eue
Converted hath/ & on Christ made him beleue

This cõstable was nothing lord of this place
Of whiche I spek/ ther he Lustaunce fonde
But kept it strongly/ many a wynter space
Under Alla/ kyng of Northumberlonde
That was ful wyse/ & worthy of his honde
Against the Scottes/ as men may wel here
But turne I wil again to my matere

Sathan/ that euer ỳ waiteth to begyle
Hawe of Lustaunce al her perfection
And cast anon how he might quyte her wyle
And made a yong knight/ ỳ dwelt in the toun
Loue her so hotte/ of foule affection
That verily/ him thought ỳ he shulde spyll
But he of her ones might haue his wyll

He woeth her/ but it auayled nought
She wolde do no synne by no wey
And for dispyte/ he compassed in his thought
To maken her on shamfull dethe to dey
He wayteth whan the constable is awey
And pryuely on a nyght he crepte
In to Hermegyldes chambre whyle she slepte

Wery for waked in her orisons
Slepeth Lustaunce and Hermegylde also
This knight/ through Sathans temptacions
Al softely is to the bedde ygo
And cutte the throte of Hermegylde a two
And layde the blody knyfe by dame Lustáce
And wẽt his way/ ther god yeue him mischáce

Sone after cometh the cõstable home agayn
And eke Alla/ that kyng was of that londe
And sawe his wyfe dispytously islayne
For whiche he wept and wronge his honde
And in the bedde the blody knyfe he fonde
By dame Lustáce/ alas what might she saye
For very wo/ her wytte was al away

To kyng Alla was told al this mischaunce
And eke the tyme/ & where/ and in what wyse
That in a shyppe was founden this Lustaunce
As here before ye han herde me deuyse
The kynges hert/ for pyte gan agryse
Whan he sawe so benygne a creature
Fal in disease and in misaduenture

For as ỳ lambe to warde his deth is brought
So stante this innocent before the kyng
This false knight/ ỳ hath this treson wrought
Berith her on hõde/ ỳ she hath don this thing
But natheles/ ther was great mourning
Among the people/ & sayd they can not gesse
That she had done so grete a wrechednesse

For they han sene her euer so vertuouse
And louyng Hermegylde/right as her lyfe
Of this bare wytnesse eueryche in ꝑ house
Saue he that Hermegylde slow wᵗ his knyfe
This gentle kyng hath caught a gret motyfe
Of this wytnesse/ꝛ thought he wold enquere
Deper in this case/the trouthe to lere

¶ Alas Custaūce/thou hast no champyon
Ne fyght canste thou not/so wela way
But he that starfte for our redemption
And vonde Sathan/ꝛ yet lyth there he lay
So be thy stronge champyon this daye
For but if Thrist on the myracle kythe
Without gylte thou shalt ben slayne aswythe

She set her down on knees/ꝛ thus she saide
Immortal god/that sauedest Susanne
Fro false blame/and thou mercyful mayde
Marye I mene/doughter to seynt Anne
Of some whose childe angels syng Osanne
If I be gyltlesse of this felonye
My socoure be/or els shal I dye

¶ Haue ye not sene somtyme a pale face
(Amonge a prees)of hym that hath ben lad
Toward his deth/wher as hym get no grace
And suche a colour in his face hath had
That men might know his face ꝑ was kyssed
Amonges al the faces in that route
So standeth Custaunce/ꝛ loketh her aboute

¶ O quenes/lyuyng in prosperite
Duchesses/and ye ladyes euerychon
Haue some routhe on her aduersyte
An emperours doughter stante alone
She hath no wyst/to whō to make her mone
O blonde ropal/that stondeth in this drede
Ferre ben thy frendes at thy great nede.

¶ This Alla kyng/hath suche compassyon
As gentle herte is ful of pyte
That from his eyen ran the water down.
Now we hastely do sette a bōke(quod he)
And if this knyght wol swere/how we that she
This woman slowe/yet wol we be auyse
Whom that we wol/shal ben our justyse

¶ Breton bōke/written with Euangiles
Was sette/and theron he swore anone
She gilty was/and in the mean whiles
An honde hym smote on the necke bone
That down he fyll atones/as a stone
And bothe his eyen brast out of his face
In sight of euery body in that place

¶ A voice was herde/in generall audience
That said: Thou hast desclandred giltles
The doughter of holy chirche/in hye presence
Thus hast thou don/and yet I holde my pees
Of this marueile/agast was all the prees
As dismayde folke/they stoden euerichone
For drede of wreche/saue Custance alone

Great was ꝑ drede/and eke the repentaūce
Of hem that hadden wrought suspection
Vpon this gilty innocent Custaunce
And for this myracle, in conclusyon
And by Custaunces mediation
The kyng/and many another in that place
Conuerted was/thanked be goddes grace

This false knight was slayn for his vntroth
By iugement of Alla hastely
And yet Custaunce/had of his dethe gret roth
And after this/Jesus of his mercy
Made Alla wedden full solempnely
This holy mayde/that is so bright ꝛ shene
And thus hath thrist made Custaūce a quene

But who was wo full/if I shulde not lye
Of this weddyng: but Donegylde ꝛ no mo
The kynges mother/full of tranny
Her thought her cursed hert brast a two
She wolde not her sonne had do so
Her thought a dispite/that he shulde take
So straunge a creature vnto his make.

We lyst not of the chaffe ne of the stre
Make so longe a tale/as of the corne
What shulde I tell of the royalle
Of ꝑ mariage/or whiche course goth beforne
Who blowith in a trompe or in an horne
The fruit of euery tale is for to say
They eten and drinken/daunce and play

They

They gon to bedde/ as it was skyll & ryght
For though that wyues ben ful holy thynges
They muste take in patience anyght
Suche maner necessaryes/ as ben plesynges
To folke that han wedded hem with rynges
And lay a tyme her holynesse a syde
As for the tyme/ it may none other betyde

On her he gatte a man chylde anon
And to a bysshoppe/ and to his constable eke
He toke his wyfe to kepe/ whan he is gon
To Scotlond warde/ his comyn for to seke
Now wyl sayne Custace/ ỳ so so humble & meke
So longe is gone with chylde tyl that styll
She halte her chambre/ abydyng Chuffes wil

¶ The tyme is come/ a man chylde she bare
Mautrause at fontstone they hym calle
This constable dothe forth come a messanger
And wrote to his kyng/ that cleped was Alle
How wel that this blyssful tydyng is byfalle
And other tydynges nedeful for to say
He taketh the letter/ & forthe he gothe his way

¶ This messanger to done his auauntage
Vnto the kynges mother rydeth swythe
And saluteth her ful fayre in his langage
Madame (quod he) ye may be glad & blythe
And thanketh god an hundred thousãde sythe
Ỳ lady quene hath chylde/ withouten doute
To ioye and blysse of al this regne aboute

Lo here the letters sealed of this thyng
That I mote bearre/ in al the haste I may
Vnto ỳ wol ought vnto your comyn ỳ kyng
I am your seruaunt liothe nyght and day
Donegylde answerde/ as at this tyme nay
But here I wol al night thou take thy reste
To morowe wol I say the what my leste

This messãger dranke sadly both ale & wyne
And stolen were his letters pryuely
Out of his boye/ whyle he slept as a swyne
And counterfeted was ful subtilly
Another letter/ wrought full synfully
Vnto the kyng direcle of this matere
Fro his constable/ as ye shal after here

The letter spake/ the quene delyuered was
Of so horryble a fendlyche creature
That in the castel none so hardy was
That any whyle durst therin endure
The mother was an elfe by auenture
Ycome/ by charmes or by sorcerye
And euery wyght hateth her companye.

Wo was this kyng/ whan he ỳ letter had seyn
But to no wight he tolde his sorowes sore
But with his owne honde he wrote ageyn
Welcome the sonde of Chryst for euermore
To me/ that am newe lerned in his lore
Lorde/ welcome be thy lyst and thy plesaunce
Ỳ lyst I put all in thyne ordinaunce

¶ Kepeth this childe/ all be it foule or fayre
And eke my wife/ vnto myn home cõmyng
Chryst whan him lyst/ may sende me an heire
More agreable than this/ to my lykyng
This letter he sealeth/ pryuely wepyng
Whiche to the messangere was taken sone
And forth he gothe/ there nys no more to done

¶ O messanger/ fulfylled of dronkennesse
Strõge is thy brethe/ thy lymmes faltren aye
And thou bewrayest al/ secretnesse
Thy mynde is lorne/ thou iangelst as a iaye
Thy face is turned in a newe araye
There dronkenne sse reygneth in any route
There nys no coil sayle hyd withouten doute

¶ O Donegild/ I ne haue non englissh digne
Vnto thy malyce/ and thy tyrannye
And therfore to the feende I the resigne
Let him endyte of thy traytrye
Fye manlysshe fye: O nay by god I lye
Fye feendlyssh spiryte/ for I dare wel tell
Though thou here walke/ thy spiryt is in hell

¶ This messãger cometh fro ỳ kyng agayne
And at the kynges mothers house he lyght
And she was of this messanger ful fayne
And plesed him in all that euer she myght
He dronke/ and wel his gyrdel vnder pyght
He slepeth/ and he snorteth in his gyse
Al nyght/ tyl the sonne gan aryse

Eſte were his letters ſtolen euerychon
And counterfeted letters in this wyſe:
The kynge cõmaundeth his conſtable anon
Vp payne of hongyng on an hye tewyſe
That he ne ſhulde ſuffren in no wyſe
Cuſtaunce/ within his realme for to abyde
Thre dayes/ and a quarter of a tyde

But in the ſame ſhyppe/as he her ſonde
Her and her yonge ſonne/and al her gere
He ſhulde crounde/and put fro the londe
And charge her/that ſhe neuer eſt come there
O Cuſtaunce/ wel may thy goſte haue fere
And ſtepping in thy dreame/ ben in penaunce
Whan Donegylde/ caſt al this ordynaunce

This meſſanger on ỳ morowe whã he woke
Vnto the caſtel halte the next way
And to the conſtable he the letter toke
And whan that he this pytous letter ſey
Ful ofte he ſayd (alas) and wela way
Lorde Chriſt (qõ he) how may this world endure
So ful of ſynne is many a creature

O mighty god/if that it be thy wyll
Syn thou art rightful iuge/ how may it be?
That thou wolte ſuffre innocente to ſpyll?
And wycked folke to reigne in proſperyte
O/ good Cuſtaunce (alas) ſo wo is me
That I mote be thy tourmentour/ or elſ dey
On ſhames dethe/ there nys non other wey

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in that place
Whan that the kyng this curſed letter ſent
And Cuſtaunce with a deedly pale face
The fourth day/ towarde her ſhippe ſhe went
But natheleſſe/ ſhe taketh in good entent
The wyl of Chriſt/ and forth in the ſtronde
She ſayd lorde/ aye welcome be thy ſonde

He that me kepte fro that falſe blame
Whyles I was on the londe amonges you
He can me kepe fro harme/ and eke fro ſhame
In the ſalte ſee/ al though I ſe not how
As ſtronge as euer he was/ he is now
In hym truſte I/ and in his mother dere
That is to me/ my ſayle and eke my fere

Her lytel chylde lay wepyng in her armе
And knelyng pitouſly/ to hym ſhe ſayde
Peace lytel ſonne/ I wol do the none harme
With that her kercher of her heed ſhe brayde
And ouer his lytel eyen ſhe it layde
And in her arme/ ſhe lulleth it ful faſt
And in to heuen her eyen vp ſhe caſte.

Mother (quod ſhe) a mayde bught Marye
Sothe is/ that through womans eggement
Mankynde was lorne/ and dampned aye to dye
For whiche thy childe was on croſſe prent
Thy blyſful eyen ſawe al his turment
Than is there no comparyſon bytwene
Thy wo/ and any wo that man may ſuſtene

Thou ſe thy childe yſlayne byfore thyn eyen
And yet nowe lyueth my lytel childe parfaye
Nowe lady bught/ to whom al woful cryen
Thou glorie of womanheed/ thou fayre may
Thou haueyn of refute/ bught ſterre of day
Reweon my childe/ of thy gentylneſſe
That reweſt on euery ruful in diſtreſſe

O lytell childe (alas) what is thy gilte?
That neuer wroughteſt ſynne/ as yet parde
Why wolle thyn harde father haue the ſpilte?
O mercy: dere conſtable (quod ſhe)
As let my lytell childe dwell here with the
And if thou darſt not ſauen hym fro blame
So kyſſe hym ones/ in his fathers name

Therwith ſhe loketh backwarde to the londe
And ſaid: farwell huſbonde routhleſſe
And vp ſhe riſt, and walketh doun ỳ ſtronde
Towarde the ſhippe/ her folweth all ỳ preeſs
And euer ſhe prayeth her child to holden his pees
And taketh her leue/ and with an holy entent
She bleſſeth her/ and into the ſhippe ſhe went

Vitayled was the ſhippe/ it is no drede
Habundantly/ for her full long ſpace
And other neceſſaries that ſhulde nede
She had inow/ heried be goddes grace
For wynde a tweddert/ almyghty god purchace
And bringe her home/ I can no better ſay
But in the ſee/ ſhe dryueth forthe her way

Fyfte

¶Alla the kyng cometh home sone after this
Onto his castell/ of whiche I tolde
And asketh where his wyfe & his chylde is
The constable gan aboute his herte to colde
And playnly al the maner hym tolde
As ye han herde/ I can tel it no better
And sheweth the kyng his seale and his letter

And sayd: lorde as ye cõmaunded me
Vp payne of dethe/ so haue I done certayne
This messanger tormented was/ tyl he
Must nedes nowen/ and tel plat and playne
Fro night to night/ in what place he had layn
And thus by wytte and subtel enquerynge
Imaged was/ by whom this harm gan spring

¶The kynde was knowen/ by the letter wrote
And al the venym of this cursed dede
But in what wyse/ certaynly I note
The effecte is this/ that Alla out of drede
His mother slow/ that may men playnly rede
For that she traytoure was to her alegeaunce
Thus endeth olde Donegild with mischaunce

¶The sorowe that this Alla nyght & day
Maketh for his childe/ and for his wyfe also
There is no tonge that it tel may
But now we wol I to Custaunce go
That fleeth in the see/ in payne and wo
Fyue yere and more/ as lysted Christes sonde
Or that her shyppe approched vnto londe

¶Vnder an heithen castel/ at the laste
Of whiche the name in my text I not fynde.
Custaunce and eke her chylde the see vp caste
Almighty god/ that saueth al mankynde
Haue on Custace/ & on her child some mynde
That fallen is in heithen londe este sone
In poynte to spyll/ as I shal tel you sone

Down fro þ castel cometh ther many a wight
To gauren on this shyppe/ and on Custance
But shortly fro the castel on a nyght
The lordes stewarde/ god yeue him mischance
A theef/ that had reuyed our creaunce
Came vnto the shyp alone/ and sayd he sholde
Her lemman be/ whether she wolde or nolde.

Wo was the wretched woman tho bygon
Her childe cryed/ and she cryed pitously
But blyssful Marye halpe her anon
For with her stroglyng/ wel and mightyly
The theef fel ouer the borde/ al sodaynly
And in the see he dreuched for vengaunce
And thus hath chryst vnwemed kept Custance

¶O foule lust of luxure/ lo thyn ende
Nat onely that thou sayntest mans mynde
But verily/ thou wolt his body shende
The ende of thy werke/ or of thy lustes blynd
Is cõplaynyng: how many on may mẽ fynd
That not for werke somtyme/ but for thẽtent
To doy this synne/ ben eyther slayne or shent

How may this wyke woman haue þ strength
Her to defende agaynst this renegate?
O Golyas/ vnmesurable of length
How might Dauid make the so mate?
So ponge/ and of armure so desolate
How durst he loke on thy dredful face?
Wel may men sene/ it is but goddes grace.

¶Who yaue Judith courage or hardynesse
To sleen hym Holofernes in his tente
And to delyuer out of wretchydnesse
The people of god: I say/ for this entent
That right as god/ spyrite and bygore sente
To hem/ and saued hem out of mischaunce
So sent he might and bigore to Custaunce

Forth goth her ship thorowe þ narow mouth
Of Subalter and septe/ fletyng aye
Somtyme weste/ & somtyme northe & south
And somtyme este/ ful many a wery daye
Tyl Christes mother/ pblessed be she aye
Hath shapen/ through her endelesse goodnesse
To make an ende of al her heuynesse.

¶Explicit secunda pars/
et sequitur pars
tertia.

¶ Now let vs stynte of Lustace but a throwe
And speke we of the Romayne emperoure
That out of Surrey hath by letters knowe
The slaughter of christen folke a dishonoure
Done to his doughter/ by a false traytour
I meane the cursed wicked Soudonnesse
That at the feest/ let sleen bothe more & lesse

For whiche this Emperour hath sent anoon
His senatour/ with royal ordynaunce
And other lordes/ god wote many one
On Surreyns to done hye vengeaunce
They brennen/ sleen/ & bringen hem to mischãce
Ful many a day: but shortly this is the ende
Homward to Rome/ they shapen hem to wende

This senatour repayreth with victorye
To Rome warde/ sayling ful royally
And met the shyp dryuyng/ as sayth the storye
In whiche Lustaunce/ sate ful pitously
Nothyng knewe he what she was/ ne why
She was in suche array/ ne she nolde sey
Of her estate/ though she shulde dey

He bringeth her to Rome/ and to his wyfe
He yaue her/ and her ponge sonne also
And with the senatour she ladde her lyfe
Thus can our lady bring out of wo
Wofull Lustaunce/ and many another mo
And longe tyme dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes cure/ as was her grace.

The senatours wyfe her aunte was
But for al that/ she knewe her neuer the more
I wol no lenger tarye in this caas
But to kyng Alla/ the whiche I spake of yore
That for his wyfe wepeth/ and spyleth sore
I wol retourne/ and let I wyl Lustaunce
Vnder the senatours gouernaunce.

¶ Kyng Alla/ which yͤ had his mother slayne
Vpon a day fel in suche repentaunce
That if I shortly tellen al shal/ a playne
To Rome he cometh/ to receyue his penaunce
And putteth him in the popes ordynaunce
In hye & in lowe/ and Jesu christ besought
Forgeue his wicked werkes/ that he wrought

The fame anon throughout Rome town is born
How Alla kyng/ shal come on pilgrymage
By herbegers that wenten hym byfore
For whiche the senatour/ as was vsage
Rode him agayne/ and many of his lynage
As wel to shewen his hye magnyficence
As to done any kyng reuerence.

¶ Great chere dothe this noble senatour
To kyng Alla / and he to him also
Euerych of hem dothe other great honour
And so byfel/ that on a day or two
This senatour is to kyng Alla go
To feest/ and shortly if I shal not lye
Lustaunces sonne went in his companye

Som mẽ wold sayne/ at yͤ request of Lustace
This senatour had ladde this childe to feest
I may not tellen every circumstaunce
Be as be may/ there was he at leste
But sothe it is/ right at his mothers heste
Byfore Alla/ duryng the meate space
The childe stode/ lokyng in the kynges face

This Alla kyng/ hath of this child gret wonder
And to the senatour he sayd anon
Whose is yͤ fayre childe/ that stondeth yonder?
I not (quod he) by god and by saynt John
A mother he hath/ but father hath he non
That I of wote/ but shortly in a stounde
He tolde Alla/ howe the childe was founde

But god wote (quod this senatour also)
So vertuous a lyquer in my lyfe
Ne sawe I neuer/ as she/ ne herde of mo
Of worldly woman/ mayden/ ne of wyfe
I dare wel say/ she had leuer a knyfe
Throughout her brest/ than ben a woman wicke
There is no man couthe bring her to yͤ pricke

Now was the childe as lyke Lustaunce
As possible is/ a creature for to be
Thus Alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of Dame Lustaunce/ and theron mused he
Pense that the childes mother were aught she
That is his wyfe/ and priuely he sighte
And spedde him fro the table/ that he myghte

Parfay

Parfay he thought/ ꝑ fantome is ny myn heed
I ought deme of ſhyſful ingement
That in the ſalte ſee my wyfe is deed
And afterwarde he made his argument
What wot I/ if Chriſt hath hyther ſent
My wyfe by ſee: as wel as he her ſente
To my countrey/ fro thens ꝑ ſhe was wente

And after anon/ home with the ſenatour
Gothe Alla/ for to ſe this wonder chaunce
This ſenatour dothe Alla great honour
And haſtely he ſent after Conſtaunce
But trufteth wel/ her luſte not to daunce
Whan ſhe wyfe wherfore was that ſonde
Vnneth vpon her fete myght ſhe ſtonde.

¶ Whan Alla ſawe his wife/ ſayde he her gret
And wept/ that it was routhe for to ſe
For at the firſt loke he on her ſet
He knewe wel verely/ that it was ſhe
And for ſore we/ as domb ſtante as a tre
So was her herte ſhet in diſtreſſe
Whan ſhe remembreth his vnkyndneſſe

Wyfe ſhe ſwouned in his owne ſyght
He wepeth and hem eyeruſeth pitouſly
Now we god (qꝺ he) and his halowes bright
So wyſly on my ſoule haue mercy
That of youre harme/ as giltleſſe am I
As is Maurys my ſonne/ ſo ryde youre ſore
Elis the ſende me ſtrake out of this place.

¶ Long was the ſobbyng/ & the bytter payne
Or that her wofful herte myght reſt
Great was the pyte to here hem complayne
Through whiche playntes gan her wo encreſſe
I praye you al my labouure to releſſe
I may not tel her wo/ tyl to morowe
I am ſo wery to ſpeke of her ſorowe

But fynally/ whan that the ſothe is wyſte
That Alla giltleſſe was of her wo
I trowe an hundred tymes hath they kyſſe
And ſaithe a blyſſe is there bytwyxt hem two
That ſaue the ioye/ that laſteth euermo
There is no tyde/ that any creature
Hath ſeyn or ſhal/ whyle ꝑ worlde may dure

Tho prayed ſhe her huſbonde meſely
In teleſyng of her pytous payne
That he wolde pray her father ſpecially
That of his maieſty he wolde enclyne
To vouchefafe ſomday with him to dyne
She prayed him eke/ he ſhulde by no way
Vnto her father no worde of her to ſay

¶ Som men wolde ſay/ ꝑ the child Maurice
Dothe this meſſage vntyl this emperour
But as I geſſe/ Alla was not ſo nyce
To him that was of ſo ſouerayne honour
As he that is of chriſten folke the flour
Sent any chylde/ but it is bette to deme
He went him ſelfe/ and ſo it may wel ſeme

This emperour graunted gentelly
To come to dyner/ as he him byſought
That al was redy he loked bely
Vpon this chylde/ & on his doughter thought
Alla gothe to his inne/ and as him ought
Arrayde for this feeſt in euery wyſe
As ferforth as his conning may ſuffyce

The morowe came/ & Alla gan him dreſſe
And eke his wife/ the emperour for to mete
And forth they ryde in ioye and in gladneſſe
And whan ſhe ſawe her father in the ſtrete
She lyght a downe and falleth him to fete
Father (qꝺ ſhe) youre yonge chylde Conſtaunce
Is now ful clene out of youre remembraunce

I am youre doughter Conſtaunce (quod ſhe)
That whylom ye han ſent into Surrye
It am I father/ that in the ſalte ſee
Was put alone/ and damned for to dye
Now good father/ I you mercy crye
Sende me no more vnto Hethenneſſe
But thanketh my lorde here of his kyndneſſe.

¶ Who can the pytous ioye tellen all
Betwyxt hem thre/ ſyn they ben thus mette
But of my tale make an ende I ſhall
The day gothe faſte/ I wol no lenger lette
Thus glad folke to dyner ben ſette
In ioye and blyſſe/ at meate I let hem dwell
A thouſande folde welmore than I can tell

This

The Squiers prologue.

This childe Maurys was sythen Emperour
Made by the pope/and lyued chastely
To Cristes churche he dyd great honour
But I let al this storye passen by
Of Custaunce is my tale specially
In olde Romayne gestes men may fynde
Maurys lyfe/I beare it not in mynde

This kyng Alla/ whan he his tyme sey
With this Custance/ his holy wyfe so swete
To Englonde ben they come the right wey
Where as they lyue in ioye and in quyete
But lytel whyle it lasteth I you hete
Ioye of this worlde/for tyme wol not abyde
Fro day to night/ it chaungeth as the tyde

Who syued euer in suche delyte a day
That he ne meued eyther in conscience
Or pre/or talent of some kyn affray
Enuye or pride/or passyon/or offence?
I me say/ but for this ende/ and this sentence
That lytel whyle in ioye or in plesaunce
Lasteth the blysse of Alla with Custaunce

For deth/that taketh of hye & lowe his rente
Whan passed was a yere/ euyn as I gesse:
Out of this worlde kyng Alla he hente
For whom Custance hath ful gret heuynesse
Nowe let vs prayen god his soule blesse
And dame Custaunce/ fynally to say
Towarde the towne of Rome gothe her way

To Rome is come this holy creature
And fyndeth her father hole and sounde
Nowe is she shaped al her auenture
And whan that she her father hath yfounde
Downe on her knees gothe she to grounde
Wepyng for tendernesse in herte blythe
She herieth god/an hundred thousande sythe

In vertue and holy almesdede
They lyuen al/and neuer a sonder wende
Tyl dethe departen hem/this lyfe they lede
And fareth nowe wel/my tale is at an ende
Nowe Jesu christ/ yͤ of his myght may sende
Ioye after wo/gouerne vs in his grace
And kepe vs al/that ben in this place.

Thus endeth the man of lawes tale/and here folowyth the Squiers prologue.

Our hoste on his styropes stode anon
And said:good men herkeneth euerychon
This was a thrifty tale for the nones
Sir parysshe preest (qͦ he) for goddes bones
Tel vs a tale/as was thy forwarde yore
I se wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can moche good/ by goddes dygnyte
The parson him answerde/benedicite
What eyleth the man/so synfully to swere?
Our host answerd/ O Jenkyn/ be ye there
Nowe good man (qͦ our host) herkeneth to me
I smell a loller in the wynde (quod he)
Abydeth for goddes digne passyon
For we shal haue a predycacion
This loller here/wol preachen vs somwhat.
Nay by my fathers soule/ that shal he nat
Sayd the Squier/here shal he not preche
Here shal he no gospel glose ne teche
We leueth al in the great god (quod he)
He wolde sowen some dissencion
Or spynne cockel in our clene corne
And therfore hoste/ I warne the byforne
My toly body/shal a tale tell
And I shal rynge you so merry a bell
That I shal waken al this companye
But it shal not ben of philosophye
Ne phisyke/ne termes queynte of lawe
Ther is but lytel latyn in my mawe.

Here endeth the Squiers prologe/ and hereafter folowyth his tale.

A T Sarra/ in the londe of Tartary
There dwelt a kyng that warred Surry
Thrugh which ther ded many a doughty mā
This noble kyng was called Cambuscan
Whiche in his tyme was of so great renoun
That there nas no where/ in no regioun
So excellent a lorde in al thyng
Hym lacked naught that longed to a kyng
As of the secte/ of whiche he was borne
He kept his lay/ to whiche he was sworne
And therto he was hardy/ wyse/ and ryche
And pytous and iuste alway plyche
Trewe of his worde/ benygne and honorable
Of his corage/ as any centre stable
Yonge/ fresshe/ & stronge/ in armes desyrous
As any bacheler of al his hous
A fayre person he was/ and fortunate
And kept alway so royal astate
That there nas no where suche another man.
This noble kyng/ this tartre/ this Cambuscan
Had two sonnes by Elfeta his wyfe
Of whiche the eldest hyght Algarsyfe
That other was cleped Camballo.
A doughter had this worthy kyng also
That yongest was/ and hyght Canace
But for to tel you al her beaute
It lythe not in my tonge/ ne in my conning
I dare not undertake so hye a thyng
Myn englysshe eke is unsufficient
It muste ben a rethor excellent
That couthe his colours/ longyng for ỹ arte
If he shulde discryue here euery parte
I am none suche/ I mote speke as I can
And so byfel/ that this Cambuscan
Hath twenty wynter borne his dyademe
As he was wont/ fro yere to yere I deme
He let the feest of his natiuyte
Done crye/ throughout Sarra his cyte
The laste ydus of Marche/ after the yere.
Phebus the sonne/ ful holy was and clere
For he was nye his exaltation
In Martes face/ and in his mansion
In Aryes/ the colerike/ the hote sygne
Ful lusty was the wether and benygne
For whiche the soules/ ayenst the sonne shene
What for the season/ and the yonge grene
Ful sonde songe her affections
Hem semed han getten hem protections
Ayen the swerde of wynter kene and colde.
¶ This Cambuscan/ of which I haue you tolde
In royal vestementes/ sytte on his deys
With dyademe/ ful hye in his paleys
And helde his feest so royal and so ryche
That in this worlde nas there noon it lyche
Of whiche/ if I shal tel of al the array
Than wolde it occupye a somers day
And eke it needeth not to deuyse
At euery course/ the ordre of her seruyce
I wol not tel of her straunge sewes
Ne of her swannes/ ne of her heronsewes
Eke in that londe/ as tellen knightes olde
Ther is some meate/ that is ful daynty holde
That in this londe men retche of it but smalle
There is no man that may reporten all.
I wyl not tarye you/ for it is prime
And for it is no fruyte/ but losse of tyme
Vnto my first purpose I wol haue recourse.
¶ And so byfel that after the thirde course
Whyle that this kyng sytte thus in his noblay
Herkenyng his mynstralles her thynges play
Before hym at his bord deliciously

In at

In at the halle dore al sodaynly
There come a knyght on a stede of brasse
And in his honde a brode myrrour of glasse
Upon his thombe he had of golde a ryng
And by his syde a naked swerde hongyng
And up he rydeth to the hye borde
In al the halle ne was there spoke a worde
For marueyle of the knyght/ him to beholde
Ful besyly they waiten yonge and olde.
¶ This straunge knyght ꝑ come thus soderly
Al armed saue his heed/ ful royally
Salued kyng and quene/ and lordes all
By ordre/ as they sytten in the hall
With so hye reuerence and obeysaunce
As wel in speche as in countenaunce
That Gawayne with his olde curtesye
Thoughe he come ayen out of fayrye
Ne coude him not amende of no worde
And after this/ before the hye borde
He with a manly voyce sayd his message
After the forme vsed in his langage
Without vyce of syllable or of letter
And for his tale shulde seme the better
Accordant to his wordes was his chere
As techeth arte of speche hem that it lere
Al be that I can not so wel his style
Ne I ne can not clymben so hye a style
yet sayd I thus/ as to my conen entente
Thus moche amounteth al that euer he mente
If it so be/ that I haue it in my mynde.
¶ He sayd: The kyng of Araby and of ynde
My liege lorde/ on this solempne day
Salueth you/ as he best can and may
And sendeth you/ in honoure of your feest
By me that am redy at your heest
This stede of brasse/ that easyly and well
Can in the space of a day naturell
This is to say/ in four and twenty houres
Where so ye lyst/ in drought or in shoures
Beren your body in to every place
Into Whiche your herte wylleth to pace
Without wem of you/ through foule or fayre
Or if ye lyst to flen in the eyre
As doth an Egle/ whan him lyst to soare
This same stede shal beare you euermore
Withouten harme/ tyl ye ben there you leste
Though that ye slepen on his backe and reste
And turne agayn with the writhyng of a pyn
He that it wrought coude ful many a gyn
He wayted ful many a constellation
Or he had done this operation
And knew ful many a seale & many a bonde
This myrrour eke ꝑ I haue in myn honde
Hath suche a might/ that men may in it se
Whan there shal fallen any aduersyte
Unto your reigne/ or to your selfe also
And openly se/ who is your frende and foe
And ouer al this/ if any lady bright
Hath set her herte on any maner wyght
If he be false/ she shal the treason se
His newe loue/ and al his subtelte
So openly/ that there shal nothyng hyde
Wherfore agayne this lusty somer tyde
This myrrour and this ryng/ that ye may se
He hath sent to my lady Canace
your excellent doughter that is here.
¶ The vertue of this ryng/ if ye wol here
Is this/ that if she lyst it for to were
Upon her thombe/ or in her purse it bere
There is no foule/ that fleeth vnder heuen
That she ne shal vnderstonde his steuen
And knowe his meanyng openly and playne
And answere him in his langage agayne
And euery grasse that groweth vpon roote
She shal wel knowe/ & whom it wol do bote
Al be his woundes neuer so depe and wyde.
¶ This naked swerde/ ꝑ hangeth by my syde
Suche vertue hath/ ꝑ what man so ye smyte
Throughout his armure it wol kerue & byte
Were it as thycke as a braunched oke
And what man that is wounded wt the stroke
Shal neuer be hole/ tyl that you lyst of grace
To stroken him with ꝑ platte in thilke place
There he is hurte/ this is as moche to sayne
Ye mote with the platte swerde agayne
Stroken him in the wounde/ & it wol close
This is very sothe withouten glose
It fayleth not/ whyles it is in your holde.
& whan this knyght hath thus his tale tolde
He rydeth out of the halle/ and doun he lyght
His stede/ whiche that ye haue as sonne in sight
Stante in the courte styl as any stone
The knyght is in to chambre ladde anone
He is vnarmed/ and to the meate yfette

And

And al that harneys bifoune him sette
Thus is to sayn/the swerde & eke the mirrour
Al boune was in to the hye toure
With certayne officers ordeyned therfore
And to Canace the ryngre is boze
Solempnely/there she sate at the table
But sykerly without any fable
The horse of brasse/ that may not be remeued
It stant/ as it were to the grounde ygleued
There may no man out of the place it dryue
For none engyne/or wyndlas/or polyue
And cause why/for they can not the craste
And therfore in the place they han it saste
Tyl ỳ the knight hath taught hem ỳ manere
To doyden him/as ye shal after here.
¶ Great was ỳ prees/ that swarmed to & fro
To gauren on the horse/ that stondeth so
For it so hye was/& so brode and longe
So wel proporcyoned for to ben stronge
Right as it were a stede of Lumbardye
Therwith so horsly/and so quycke of eye
As it a gentle courser of Poyle were
For certes / fro his tayle to his ere
Nature ne arte coude him not amende
In no degre/as al the people wende
But euermore her moste wonder was
Howe that it couthe goyn/and was of bras
It was of fayre/as the people semed
Dyuers folke dyuersly they demed
As many heedes/as many wittes there ben
They nusmuse/as dothe a swarme of ben
And maden sklles after her fantesyes
Rehersyng of the olde poetryes
And sayden it was ylyke the Pegase
The horse that had wynges for to flee
Or elis it was the grekes horse Synon
That brought Troye to destruction
As wys in this olde bokes rede.
¶ Thyn hert (qd one) is euermore in drede
I trowe some men of armes ben therin
That shapen hem this cyte for to wyn
It were right good/ ỳ such thinges were knowen
Ey other to wared to his fela we howe
And sayd he syed/for it is rather ilyke
In apparence made by some magyke
As iogglours playen at these festes grete
Of sondry thoughtes/thus they iangle & trete
As leude people demeth comenly
Of thynges that ben made more subtilly
Than they can in her leudenesse comprehende
They demen gladly to the badder ende.
And some of hem wondren on the mirrour
That boune was vp to the mayster toure
Howe men might in it suche thynges se.
And other answerde/certes it myght wel be
Naturally by compossyons
Of angels and of sterre reflections
And sayden/in Rome was suche on
They spoken of Alocen and Vitulon
And Arystote/that writeth in her lyues
Of queynte mirrours/and of prospectiues
As knowen they that han her bokes herde.
And other folke han wondred on the swerde
That wolde perce through euery thyng
And fel in speche of Telophus the kyng
And of Achilles for his queynte spere
For he couthe with it heale and dere
Right in such wyse as men wt the swerde
Of which right nowe ye haue youre selue herde
They spoken of sondry hardyng of metal
And spoken of medycyns eke withal
And howe/and whan it shulde hardned be
Whiche is vnknowe algate to me.
¶ Tho spoke they of Canaces ryng
And sayden al/that suche a wonder thyng
Of craste of ryngres herde they neuer non
Saue that Moyses/and kyng Salomon
Had a name of coniuryng of suche arte
Thus sayen the people/& drawen hem aparte
But natheles some sayden that it was
Wonder to maken of ferne asshen/glas
And yet is glas not lyke asshen of ferne
But for they han knowen it so ferne
Therfor they seyen her iangelyng & her wōder
As for wonderen some on cause of thunder
On ebbe & fludde/on gossomer/and on myste
And on al thyng/tyl the cause is wyste.
Thus ianglen they/and demen and deuyse
Tyl that the kyng gan fro his boorde aryse.
¶ Phebus hath left the angle meridional
And yet ascendyng was the beest royal
The gentle lyon with his Adrian
Whan that this tartre kyng Cambuscan
Rose fro his boorde/there as he sate full hye
Bysoure

Byfore him gothe the loude mynstralcye
Tyl he came to his chambre of paramentes
There as they sowned dyuers instrumentes
That is lyke an heuen for to here
Nowe dauncen lusty Venus children dere
For in the fysshe her lady sate ful hye
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.
¶ This noble kyng is sette vpon his trone
This straunge knight is set to hym ful sone
And in the daunce he gothe with Lancte
Here is the reuel and the iolyte
That is not able a dull man to deuyse
He must han knowe loue and her seruyse
And ben a freshlyche man/ as fresshe as May
That shulde you deuyse suche array
¶ Who couthe tellen you the forme of dances
So vncouth/and so fresshe countynances:
Suche subtyl lokynges/ and dissymulynges
For drede of ialousie mens aperceyuynges
No man but Launcelot/ and he is deed
Therfore I passe ouer al this lustyheed
I say no more/but in this iolyuesse
I lete hem/tyl men to supper dresse.
¶ The stewarde byddeth spyces for to hye
And eke the wyne/in al this melodye
The vssshers and the squyers ben ygone
The spyces and the wyne is comen anone
They eten & dronken/ & whan this had an ende
Vnto the temple/as reason was/they wende
The seruyce is done/they soupen al by day
What nedeth it to reherse hem array?
Eche man wot wel/ that at a kynges feest
Is plenty/to the moste and to the leest
And deyntes mo/ than ben in my knowyng.
And after supper gothe this noble kyng
To seen this horse of brasse/with al his route
Of lordes and of ladyes hym aboute
Such wondring ther was on this hors of bras
That sythen the great siege of Troye was
There as men wondred on an horse also
Ne was there suche a wondring/as was tho
But fynally/the kyng asketh the knyght
The vertue of this horse and the myght
And prayde hym to telleu of his gouernaūce.
The horse anon gan to tryppe and daunce
Whan ỳ this knight layde honde on his rayne
And sayd/ sir there is no more to sayne
But whan you lyste to ryden any where
Ye mote tryll a pyn/ stante in his ere
Whiche I shal tel you betwene vs two
ye mote nempne hym to what place also
Or to what countre you lyst to ryde
And whan ye come there you lyste abyde
Bydde hym descende/and trylle a nother pyn
For therin lyeth the effecte of al the gyn
And he wol downe descende/& don your wyll
And in that place he wol abyde styll
Though al the world had the contrary swore
He shal not thens be ythrowe ne vbore
Or if you lyst bydde him thens gon
Tryl this pyn/and he wol vanysshe anon
Out of the syght of euery maner wyght
And come ayen/be it day or nyght
Whan that you lyst to clepen hym agayne
In suche a gyse/as I shal to you sayne
Betwyxt you and me/and that ful sone
Ryde whā you lyst/ ther nys no more to done
¶ Enfourmed whan ỳ kyng was of ỳ knight
And hath conceyued in his wytte aright
The maner and the forme of al this thyng
Ful glad and ful blythe/the noble kyng
Repayreth to his reuel/ as byfore
The bridel is in to the toure vbore
And kept amonge his tewels lefe and dere
The horse vanysshed/ I not in what manere
Out of her syght/ ye get no more of me
But thus I lete in luste and iolyte
This Cambyscan/his lordes festyng
Tyl wel nye the day began to spring.

¶ Explicit prima pars/ et sequitur pars secunda.

The norice of digestyon/the slepe
Gan on hem wynke/& bad hem take kepe
That myrth/ dunke/ & labour wol haue reste
And with a galpyng mouthe hem al he keste
And sayd/it was tyme to lye adoun
For blode was in his dominacioun
Cherysshyth blode/ natures frende (quod he)
They thanken hym galpyng/by two by three
And euery wight gan drawen hym to reste
As slepe hem bade/ they toke it for the beste.
Her dremes shul not nowe ben told for me
Full

Ful were her herdes of fumosyte
That causeth drenes/of which ther is no char
They slepen/tyl it was prime large (ge
The moste parte/but it were Canace
She was ful mesurable/as women be
For of her father had she take her leue
To gon to rest/sone after it was eue
Her lyst not appalled for to be
Nor on the morowe/vnrestlyche for to se
And slept her first slepe/and awoke
For suche a ioy she in her herte toke
Both of her queynt ryngc/ & of her myrrour
That twenty tymes she chaūged her colour
And in her slepe/right for impressyon
Of her myrrour/she had a vysyon
Wherfore/or the sonne vp gan glide
She cleped her maistresses her besyde
And sayd/her luste for to aryse.
¶ These olde women/that ben gladly wyse
As is her maystresse/ answerde hir anon
And said: madame/ whider wol ye gon
Thus erly: for folke ben al in rest.
¶ I wol (quod she aryse) for me lest
No lenger for to slepe/but walken aboute.
Her maystresse cleped women a great route
And vp they ryse/wel ten or twelue
Vp ryseth fresshe Canace her selue
As ioly and bright/as the ponge sonne
That in the Ram is four degrees vp ronne
No hyghet was he/whan she redy was
And forthe she walketh an esy pas
Arrayed after the lusty season sote
Lightly for to playen/ & walken on fote
Nought but fyue or sixe of her meyne
And in a trenche/fer in the parke gothe she.
¶ The vapour/whiche y̆ fro the erthe glode
Maketh the sonne to seme ruddy and brode
But natheles/it was so fayre a syght
That it made al her hertes for to syght
What for the season/ and for the morowe mynge
And for the foules that she herde synge
For right anon/she wyste what they ment
Right by her songe/ and knewe al her entent.
¶ The knotte why/that euery tale is holde
If it be taryed tyl lasse be tolde
Of hem that hau it herkened after yore
The sauour passeth/euer lenger the more
For fullsomnesse of prolyxite
And by the same reason thynketh me
I shulde vnto the same knot condiscende
And make of her walk ryng sone an ende.
¶ Amydde a tre / for drye as whyt as chalke
As Canace was playeng in her walke
There sate a faucon ouer her heed ful hye
That with a pytous voyce gan to crye
That al the wodde resowned of her cry
And beaten had her selfe so pitously
With bothe her wynges/ tyl the reed blode
Ran endelonge the tre/there as she stode
And euer in one/she cryed and shright
And with her bekke/her seluen so she pyght
That there nas Tygre/ne cruel beste
That dwelleth in wodde/eyther in forestc
That nolde han wept/if that they wepe conde
For sorowe of her/she shright alway so loude
For there nas neuer yet man on lyue
If that he couthe a faucon wel discryue
That herde of suche another of fayrenesse
As wel of plumage/as of gentylnesse
Of shappe/of al that might ben deuened be
A faucon peregryn than semed she
Of ferude londe/ & euermore as she stoode
She swouned now & now/for lacke of blood
Tyl wellny is she fall fro the tree.
¶ This fayre kynges doughter/this Canace
That on her fyngers bare the queynte ryngc
Thrugh which she vnderstode wel euery thig
That any foule may in his leden sayne
And conde answere him in his leden agayne
Hath vnderstande/what this faucon seyde
And wellny for routhe almost she deyde
And to the tre she gothe ful hastely
And on this faucon loketh ful pitously
And helde her lappe abrode/for wel she wyste
The faucon muste fallen from the twyste
Whan y̆ she swouned next/for lacke of blode
A longe whyle to wayten there she stoode
Tyl at the laste she spake in this manere
Vnto the hauke/as ye shalen after here.
¶ What is the cause/if it be for to tell
That ye ben in this furyal payne of hell:
Quod Canace/vnto this hauke aboue
Is this for sorowe of dethe/or losse of loue?
For as I trowe/these ben causes two

That causeth most a gentill hert wo
Of other harme it needeth not to spelle
For ye vpon your selfe you wrebe
Whiche proueth well / that eyther ire or drede
Mote bey encheson of your cruell dede
Syn that I se none other wyght you chace
For the loue of god / so doth your selfe grace
Or what may be your helpe / for west or est
Ne sawe I neuer er now / no bryde ne beest
That farde with hym selue so pitously
ye slee me with your sorowe verily
I haue of you so great compassion
For goddes loue come fro the tre adowne
And as I am a kynges doughter trewe
If that I verily the causes knewe
Of your disease / if it lay in my myght
I wolde amende it / certes or it be nyght
As wisely helpe me great god of kynde
And herbes shall I right inowe finde
To hele with your hurtes hastely
Tho shright this faucon yet more pitously
Than euer she dyd / & fell to grounde anone
And eyther a swoune deed as is a stone
Tyll Canace hath in her lappe itake
Vnto the tyme she gan of swoune awake
And after that she of swoune gan abrayde
Right in her hawkes leden thus she saide
That pite renneth soone in gentyll herte
(Feling his semilitude in paynes smert)
Is proued al day / as men may se
As well by werke as by authoute
For gentile hert kepeth gentilnesse
I se wel / that ye haue of my distresse
Compassion / my faire Canace
Of very womanly benignyte
That nature in your pitaples hath sette
Out for non hope for to fare the bette
But for to obey vnto your hert free
And for to make other beware by me
As by the whelpe / chastised is the lion
Right for that cause / and for that conclusion
While that I haue a leyser and a space
Myne harm I wol confessen or I pace
And euer while that one her sorowe tolde
That other wepte / as she to water wolde
Tyl that the faucon badde her to be stylle
And with a sike / thus she said her tylle.

There I was bredde / alas that ilke day
And fostred in a roche of marble gray
So tenderly / that nothyng eyleth me
I ne wist not what was aduersite
Tyll I conde flye / full hye vnder the skye
There dwelte a Tercelet me fast by
That semed well of all gentilnesse
All were he ful of trayson and of falsnesse
It was so wrapped vnder humble chere
And vnder hewe of trouth / & in such manere
Vnder plesaunce / and vnder busy payne
That no wight coud haue wēde he coud fayn
So depe in grayne he dyed his colours
Right as a serpent hideth him vnder flours
Tyll he may se his tyme for to bite
Right so / this god of loues ipocrite
Dothe so his seremones and obeysaunce
With his dissimulyng / & fayre assemblaunce
That sowneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is all the faire aboue
And vnder the colde / suche as ye wote
Suche was this ipocrite colde and hote
And in this wise he serued his entent
That saue the fende / non wist what he ment
Tyll he so long had weped and complayned
And many a yere his seruyce to me pfayned
Tyl that myn hert / to pitous and to nyce
Al vnwrent of his cruel malyce
For ferde of his dethe / as thought me
Vpon his othes and his surete
Graunted him loue / vpon this condition
That euermore myn honour and my renoun
Were saued / bothe preuy and apert
This is to say / that after his desert
I pane him al myn hert and al my thought
God wote / and in other wise nought
And toke his hert in chaunge of myn for aye
But sothe is said / gone sithen many a day
A trewe wight and a theef thynketh not one
And whan he sawe the thyng so fer igone
That I graunted him fully my loue
In suche a gise / as I haue said aboue
And yeuen him my trewe hert as fre
As he swore he yaf his hert to me
Anon this tigre / ful of doublenesse
Fyl on his knees with so demout humblesse
With hye reuerence / and eke by his chere

So fyl

So lyke a gentyl louer/ as of manere
So rauyssed/ as it semed for hope
That neuer Troylus/ ne Paris of Troy
Jason certes/ ne non other man
Syn Lamech was/ that alderfirst began
To louen two/ as writen folke before
Ne neuer sithen Adam was borne
Ne couthe many by twenty thousande parte
Counterfete the sophymes of his arte
Ne were worthy to vnbocle his galoche
Her doubleneesse or fayning shulde aproche
Ne so couth thanke a wight/ as he dyd me
His maner was an heuen for to se
Tyl any woman/ were she neuer so wise
So paynteth he his chere poynt deuyse
As wel his wordes/ as his countenaunce
And I so loued hym for his obeysaunce
And for the trouthe that I demed in his hert
That if so were/ that any thyng hym smert
Al were it neuer so lyte/ and I it wyst
Me thought I felte dethe at my herte twist
And shortly/ so forforth this thyng went
That my wyl was his wylles instrument
That is to say/ my wyl obeyed his wyll
In al thyng/ as ferre as reason fyll
Kepyng the boundes of my worship euer
Ne neuer had I thyng so lefe ne so leuer
As hym god wote/ ne neuer shal no mo
This last lenger than a yere or two
That I supposed of him nothyng but good.
But finally/ thus at the last it stode
That fortune wolde that he moste twyn
Out of that place/ whiche that I was in
Where me was wo/ it is no question
I can not make of it discription
For tho thyng dare I tell boldely
I knowe what the payne of dethe is therby
Suche harm I felte/ that he ne myght beleue
¶ So on a day of me he toke his leue
So sorowfully ellys/ that I wende verely
That he had felte as moche harm as I
Whan that I herde him speke/ and sawe his hewe
But natheles/ I thought he was so trewe
And eke that he repaire shulde agayne
Within a fyrthe while sothe to sayne
And reason wolde eke/ that he muste go
For his honour/ as ofte happeth so
That I made vertue of necessite
And take it well/ sithe it must nedes be
As I best myght/ I hidde fro him my sorowe
And took him by the hond/ fell down to borowe
And said thus: so I am yours all
Deth suche as I haue ben to you and shall
What he answerde/ it nedeth not reherse
Who can sayn bet than he/ who can do wers?
Whan he hath al wel ysaid/ than hath he done
Therfore behoueth him a longe spone
That shal etyn with a fende/ thus herde I say
So at the last he mote forth his way
And forthe he fleeth tyl he come there him lest
Whan it come him to purpose for to rest
I trowe he had thilke text in mynde
That al thyng repayring to his kynde
Gladeth hem selue/ thus sayn men as I gesse
Men louen of kynde newfangleneesse
As briddes don/ that men in cages fede
For though thou nyght and day take of hem hede
And strawe her cage faire and softe as silke
And gyue hem sugre/ hony/ breed and mylke
yet right anon as his dore is vppe
He with his fete wolde spoune adown his cuppe
And to the wood he wolde/ and wormes eate
So newfangle ben they of her meate
And louen noueltees of proper kynde
No gentilneesse of blode may hem bynde
So ferde this Tercelet/ alas the day
Tho he were gentel borne/ fresshe and gay
And goodly for to se/ and humble and free
He sawe vpon a tyme a kyte flee
And sodainly he lowed this kyte so
That all his loue is clene fro me goo
And hath his trouthe fassed in this wyse
Thus hathe the kyte my loue in her seruice
And I am lorne without remedy.
And with ye worde this faucon gan to crye
And swouned oft in Canaces barme
Great was ye sorowe for that hawkes harme
That Canace/ and all her women made
They vnyt howe they might her faucon glade
But Canace home beareth here in her lappe
And softely in plasters gan her wrappe
There as she with her beeke had hurt her selue
Nowe can not Canace but herbes delue
Out of the grounde and make salues newe

Of herbes precious and fyne of hewe
To helen with the hauke fro day to nyght
She dothe her besynesse/ and all her myght
And by her beddes heed she made a mewe
And couered it with veluettes blewe
In sygne of trouthe/ that is in womens sene
And all withouten ỳ mewe is peynted grene
In whiche were peynted all these false foules
As ben these tydeses/ tercelettes/ and owles
Ryght for dysprte were peynted hem beside
Pyes on hem for to crye and chyde
This leue I Canace her hauke kepynge
I wol nomore as nowe speke of her tynge
Tyl it come eyte to purpos for to sayn
How that this faucon gate her loue agayn
Repentant/ as the story telleth vs
By mediation of Camballus
The kynges sonne/ of whiche I of tolde
But hensforthe I wol my proces holde
To speken of aduentures/ and of batayls
That yet was neuer herd of so gret marueyls
First wol I tell you of Cambuscan
That in his tyme many a cyte wan
Howe that he wan Theodora to his wife
And after wol I speke of Algarsyfe
For whom ful ofte in great perill he was
Ne had he ben holpen by the horse of bras
And after Woll I speke of Camballo
That fought in lystes with the brethern two
For Canace/ er that he myght her wyn
And there I left/ I wol again begyn.

¶ Explicit secunda pars.

Apollo Whirleth vp his chare so hye
Tyll that the god Mercurius house he slye.

¶ There can be founde no more of this
fore said tale/ whiche hath ben
sought i dyuers places.

¶ Here foloweth the wordes of the Marchaunt to the Squyer/ and the wordes of the Host to the Marchaunt.

In faith Squier/ thou hast the wel iquyt
And gentelly/ I praise wel thy wyt
Qd the Marchant/ consydryng thyne youth
So felyngly thou spekest/ I the alouth
As to my dome/ there is non that is here
Of eloquence/ that shalde thy pere
yf ỳ thou lyue/ god gyue ỳ right good chaūce
And in vertue sende the perseueraunce
For of thy spekyng I haue great deynte
I haue a sonne/ and by the Trinite
I had leuer than twenty pōndes worth londe
(Though it nowe were fallen in my honde)
He were a man of suche discressyon
As that ye ben: fye on possessyon
But yf a man be vertuous with all
I haue my sonne snybbed/ and yet shall
For he to vertue lysteth nat to entende
But for to play at dise/ and to spende
And lese all that he hath/ is his vsage
And he had leuer talke with a page
Than to cōmen with any gentyll wight
Where he myght lerne gentelnesse aright
Strawe for your gētylnesse (qd our host)
What Marchaunt/ pardy well thou wost
That ech of you mote telle yn the left
A tale or two/ or breken your beheste
That know I wel (qd the marchāt) certain
I pray you haue me nat in disdayn
Though I to this man speke a worde or two
Tel on thy tale withouten wordes mo
Gladly sir host (quod he) I wol obey
Vnto your wyl/ now herkeneth what I say
I wol you nat contrary in no wise
As farre as my wittes may suffyse
I pray to god that it may plesen you
Than wotte I wel/ it is good ynowe.

¶ Thus endeth the wordes of the host and the marchant/ and here foloweth the Marchauntes prologue.

Wepyng and waylyng/ care & other sorowe
I haue ynowe/ both early & eke a morowe

Quod the marchaunt/ and so haue other mo
That wedded be/ I trowe that it be so
For wel I wote it fareth so by me
I haue a wife/ the worst that may be
For though the fende coupled to her were
She wolde him ouermatch I dare well swere
What shulde I reherse in speciall
Her high malyce: she is a shrewe at all
There is a longe and a large difference
Betwyxt Grisyldes great patience
And of my wife the passyng cruelte
Were I vnbounde/ also mote I the
I wolde neuer efte comen in the snare
We wedded men lyue in sorowe and care
Assay who so wol/ and he shal fynde
That I say soth/ by saynt Thomas of Inde
As for the more parte/ I say nat all

God shelde that it shulde so befall
Ah good sir host/ I haue wedded be
These monethes two/ and more nat parde
And yet I trowe he that all his lyfe
Hath wedded be/ though men him rife
In to the hert/ ne couthe in no manere
Tell so moche sorowe/ as I now here
Couthe tell/ of my wynes cursednesse
Now quod our host marchaunt/ so god yͤ blesse
Syn ye be so moche knowe of that arte
Full hertely I pray you tell vs parte
Gladly quod he/ but of myn owne sore
For sory hert I tell may no more.

¶ Here endeth the marchantes prologue/
and here folowyth his tale.

Whilom there was dwelling in Lombardy
A worthy knyght/ that borne was at Pauy
In welthe he lyued in great prosperite
And syngler vertuous was he
And folowed ever his knightly delyte
Of wymen/ there as was his appetyte
As doen these folke that ben seruysable
And when that he was past fyfty yere

Were it for holynesse or dotage
I can not saye/ but suche a great corage
Had this knyght to ben a wedded man
That day and nyght he dothe al that he can
To espye/ where that he wedded myght be.
Prayeng oure lorde to graunten him that he
Myght ones knowen of that blyssful lyfe
That is betwixt an husbande and his wyfe

And for to lyuen vnder that holy bonde
With which god first man and woman bonde
Non other lyfe (said he) is worthe a bean
For wedlocke is so easy and so clean
That in this worlde it is a paradise
Thus saith this olde knyght that is so wise.
And certaynly/ as sothe as god is kyng
To take a wife/ it is a glorious thyng
And namely when a man is olde and hore
Than is a wife the frute of his tresore
Than shulde he take a ponge wife and a faire
On whiche he myght engendren hym an heire
And lede his lyfe in ioye and in solace
Where as these bachelers syngen alas
When that they fynden any aduersyte
In loue/ whiche nys but childes vanyte
And trewly it sytte well to be so
That bacheleres han ofte payne and wo
On brotell grounde they bylden brotelnesse
They finde freelte/ whā they weenen sekernesse
They lyue but as briddes or beestes
In lyberte/ and vnder mpe arestes
There as a wedded man in his estate
Lyueth a lyfe blissfully and ordynate
Vnder the yoke of mariage ybounde
Wel may his hert in ioye and blysse habounde
For who can be so buxome as a wife?
Who is so trewe and eke so tentife
To kepe him sicke and hole? as is his make
For well ne wo she nyll him nat forsake
She nys nat wery him to loue and serue
Though that he lye bedreed tyll he sterue
And yet some clerkes sayn/ that it is nat so
Of whiche Theophrast is one of tho
What force though Theophrast lyst to lye
Ne take no wife (quod he) for husbondrye
As for to spare in housholde thy dispence
A trewe seruaunt dothe more diligence
Thy good to kepe/ than thyn owne wife
For she wol clayme halfe parte all her lyfe
And if that thou be sicke/ so god me saue
Thy very frendes or a trewe knaue
Wol kepe the better/ than she that waryeth aye
After thy good/ and hath don many a day
And if thou take a wife/ to the vntrewe
Ful ofte tyme it shal the sore rewe
This sentence/ and an hundred sithes worse
Writeth this man there/ god his bones curse
But take no kepe of suche vanyte
Defieth Theophrast/ and herkeneth me.
¶ A wife is goddes peste verily
All other maner pestes hardely
As landes/ rentes/ pasture/ or cōmune
Or mouables/ all ben pestes of fortune
That passen/ as a shadowe on a walle
But drede nat/ if playnly speke I shall
A wife wol last and in thyn house endure
Wel lenger than thee lyst paraventure
Marriage is a ful great sacrement
He whiche hath no wife I holde him shent
He lyueth helples/ and all desolate
I speke of folke in seculer estate.
And herkneth why/ I say nat this for nought
A woman is for mannes helpe ywrought
The hye god/ whan he had Adam maked
And sawe him alone bely naked
God of his great goodnesse said than
Lette vs maken an helpe to this man
Lyke to him selfe/ and than he made Eue
Here may ye se/ and hereby may ye preue
That a wife is mannes helpe and comforte
His paradise terrestre and his disporte
So buxome and so vertuous is she
They must nedes lyue in vnyte
One flesshe they ben/ and two soules as I gesse
Nat but one hert in wele and in distresse
A wife/ ah saynt Mary/ benedicite
How myght a man haue any aduersite
That hath a wife? certes I can nat say
The blysse that is bitwyxt hem twey
There may no tonge telle or hert thynke
If he be poore/ she helpeth him to swynke
She kepeth his good/ and wasteth neuer a del
Al that her husbonde lust/ her lyketh wel
She saith nat onis nay/ whan he saith ye
Do this (saith he) al redy sir (saith she)
¶ O blysful ordre of wedlocke precious
Thou art so mery/ and eke so vertuous
And so cōmended/ and so approued eke
That euery man/ that halte him worth a leke
Vpon his bare knees ought all his lyfe
Thanken god/ that him hath sent a wife
Or pray to god him for to sende
A wife/ to last vnto his lyues ende

For

For than his lyfe is sette in sekernesse
He may nat be disceyued/ as I gesse
So that he werche after his wyues rede
Than may he boldely leuen vp his hede
They ben so trewe and also wise
For whiche/ if thou wilt werchen as the wyse
Do al way so/ as women wol the rede
Lo how we that Jacob/ as these clerkes rede
By good counsaile of his mother Rebecke
Bounde the yonge skyn about his necke
For whiche his fathers benyson he wan
Lo Judith/ as the storie tell can
By wise counsaile goddes people kept
And slewe him Holofernes while he slept
Lo Abigail by counsaile/ how she
Saued her husbonde Nabali/ whan that he
Shulde haue be slayne. And loke Hester also
By good counsaile delyuered out of wo
The people of god/ and made him Mardochee
Of Assuere enhaunsed for to be.
¶ There nys nothyng in gree superlatyfe
(As saith Senec) above an humble wife
Suffre thy wyues tonge/ as Caton byt
She shall cōmaunde/ and thou shalt suffre it
And yet she wol obey of curtesy.
A wise is keper of thyn husbondrie
Well may the sicke man wayle and wepe
There as there nys no wife the house to kepe
I warne the/ if wisely thou wylt werche
Loue wel thy wife/ as Christ loueth his cherch
If thou loue thy selfe/ thou loue thy wife
No man hateth his flesshe: but fostreth it/ and therfore yodde I the
Cherisshe thy wife/ for thou shalt neuer ithe
Husbōde and wife/ what so men iape or play
Of worldely folke holde the seker way
They be so knyt/ there may non harm betide
And namely vpon the wyues syde
For which this January/ of whiche I tolde
Conforted hath in his dayes olde
The lusty lyfe/ the vertuous quiete
That in mariage hony swete
And for his frendes on a day he sent
To tellen hem the effecte of his entent.
¶ With face sadde/ his tale hath he hem tolde
He said frendes/ I am hoore and olde
And almost (god wot) on the pytes brinke
Vpon my soule somwhat must I thynke
I haue my body foolysly dispended
Blessed be god/ it shall ben amended
For I wol ben certayne a wedded man
And that anon in al the hast I can
Vnto some mayde/ fayr and tender of age
I prey you shapeth for my mariage.
All sodainly/ for I wol nat abyde
And I wol fonden to espye on my syde
To whom I may be wedded hastily
But for as moche as ye ben more than I
Ye shullen rather suche a thyng espyen
Than I/ and there me lust best to alyen
But one thyng warn I you my frendes dere
I wol non olde wife haue in no manere
She shall nat passe sixtene yere certayn
Olde fissh/ a yonge flesshe wol I haue fayn
Better is (qd he) a pyke than a pikerell
And better than olde beef is the tender veell
I wol no woman of thirty wynter age
It nys but bene straw and great forage
And eke these olde wedowes (god it wote)
They connen so moche craft in Wades bote
So moche bisyen harme what hem lyst
That with hem shulde I neuer lyue in rest
For sondry scholes maketh subtel clerkes
A woman of many scholes halfe a clerke is
But certainly/ a yonge thyng may men gye
Right as men may warm wax with hāden plye
Wherfore I say you plainly in a clause
I nyl non olde wife haue for this cause
For if so were that I had myschaunce
And in hir couthe haue no plesaunce
Than shulde I lede my lyfe in auoutry
And so streight to the deuyll whan I dye
Ne children shulde I non vpon hir geten
Yet had I leuer houndes had me eten
Than that myne heritage shulde fall
In straunge fondes: and thus I tell you all
I dote nat/ I wotte the cause why
Men shulde wedden: and furthermore wot I
There speketh many a man of mariage
That wot no more of this than doth my page
For whiche causes men shulde take a wife
If he may nat lyuen chast his lyfe
Take him a wife with great deuotion
Because of lefull procreation
Of children/ to the honour of god above

And

And nat onely for paramour or for lone
And for they shulden lechery eschewe
And pelde her dettes whan that it is dewe
Or for that eche man shulde helpen other
In myschefe/as a suster shulde the brother
And lyue in chastite full heuenly.
¶ But sire (by your leaue that am nat I
For god be thanked/ I dare make auaunt
I felt my lymmes hole and sufficiaunt
To don all that a man belongeth to
I wotte my selue best what I may do
Though I be hore/I fare as dothe a tree
That blossometh er that frute iwoxe be
The blossomed tree is neither dry ne deed
I sele no where hore but on my heed
Myn hert and my lymmes been as grene
As laurell is through the yere to sene
And sithen that ye han herde all myn entent
I pray you to my wyll ye wol assent.
Dyuers men dyuersly him tolde
Of mariage/ many ensamples olde
Some blameth it/some prayseth it certayne
But at the last/ shortly for to sayne
(As al day falleth altercation
Betwixt frendes in disputation)
There fell a strife betwixt his brethern two
Of whiche that one was cleped Placebo
Justynus soothly called was that other
¶ Placebo said: O January brother
Full lytell nede han ye my lorde so dere
Counsaile ta aye of any that is here
But that ye ben so full of sapience
That you ne lyketh for your hye prudence
To bayne fro the worde of Salomon
This worde sathe he vnto euerichone
Worke al thyng by counsayle/ thus said he
And than shalt thou nat repent the
But tho that Salomon spake suche a worde
Myn owne dere brother and my lorde
So wisely god my soule bring to ease a rest
I holde your owyn counsayle for the best.
For brother myn/ take of me this motyse
I haue ben now a court many al my lyse
And god wote / though I now vnworthy be
I haue stonden in full great degre
Aboute lordes in ful great estate
yet had I neuer with non of hem debate
I neuer hem contraried trewly
I wotte well that my lorde can more than I
That he sathe/I holde it ferme and stable
I say the same/or ells thyng semblable
A ful great fole is any counsaylour
That serueth any lorde of hye honour
That dare presume/or ones thynke it
That his counsayle shulde passe his lordes wit
Nay/lordes be no soles be my fay
Ye haue your selfe spoken here to day
So hye sentence/so holy/and so well
That I consent/and conferme euery dell
Your wordes all/ and your opinyon
By god there nys no man in all this town
Ne in Italye/coude bette haue sayd
Thus holdeth him of this full wel a payde
And trewly it is an hye corage
Of any man that is stopen in age
To taken a yong wyfe/ by my father kyn
Your hert hongeth on a ioly pyn
Doth nowe in this matere right as you lest
For finally I holde it for the best.
¶ Justynus that ay satte and herde
Right in this wise to Placebo he answerde
Nowe brother myne be patyent I you pray
Sith ye haue said/ now herkneth what I say
¶ Seuer among other wordes wyse
Saith/ that a man ought him wel auyse
To whom he yeueth his londe or his catell
And sithens I ought auyse me right well
To whom I gyue my good away fro me
Well moche more I ought auysed be
To whom I gyue my body: for alway
I warne you well it is no childes play
To take a wife without auysement
They must enquere (this is myn assent)
Wheder she be sober/ wise/or dronkelewe
Or proude/or other wayes a shrewe
A chider/ or a waster of thy good
Other riche or poore/or ells a man is wood
Al be it so/that no man fynde shall
Non in this worlde/ that trotteth hole in all
Ne man/ne beest/suche as men can deuise
But natheles/it ought ynough suffise
With any wife/ if so were that she had
Mo good thewes/than her vices badde
And all this asketh leyser to enquere

For

For god wotte I haue wept many a tere
Ful preuely/sithe I had a wife
Praise who so wol a wedded mannes lyfe
Certeyn I fynde in it but cost and care
And observaunces of all wyfes bare
And yet god wote/my neighbours about
And namely of women many a rout
Sayn that I haue the most stedfast wyfe
And eke the meekest one that beareth lyfe
But I Wot best/where wrungeth me my sho
ye may for me/right as you lyst do
Auyse you/ ye ben a man of age
How we that ye entren into mariage
And namely with a ponge wife and a faire
By him that made water/ erthe/ and ayre
The pongest man that is in all this rout
Is besy pnowe to bringe it about
To haue his wife alone/ trusteth me
Ye shall nat pleasen her yeres thre
This is to sayn/ to don her plesaunce
A wise astreth ful moche observaunce
I praye you that ye be nat wrell apayde.
Wel (qd̄ this January) a hast thou al said:
Strawe for thy Senec/ and for thy wordes
I count it nat worth a pannyer ful of herbes
Of schole termes/ wiser men than thou
As thou hast herde/ assenteth it right nowe
To my purpose Placebo/what say ye:
I say it is a cursed man (qd̄ he)
That letteth matrymony sekerly
And with that wordes they risen sodainly
And ben assented fully/ that he shulde
Be wedded when him lyst/ & where he wolde
Hyghe fantasy and curiousnesse
Fro day to day/ gan in the soule crepresse
Of January/ about his mariage
Many faire shappe/and many faire visage
There passeth through his hert night by night
As who so take a mirrour polysshed bright
And set it in a comun market place
Than shulde he se many a figure pace
By his mirrour/ and in the same wise
Gan January within his thought devise
Of maydens/ whiche that dwelten him besyde
He wyst nat where he might abyde
For if that one had beautie in her face
Another stont so in the peoples grace
For her sadnesse and her benignyte
That of the people gretteste voice had she
And some were riche/ and had badde name
But nathelesse/ bitwixt ernest and game
He at last apoynted him on one
And lete all other from his hert gone
And chese her of his owne authoute
For love is blynde al day/ and may nat se
And whan that he was in his bedde ybrought
He purtreyde in his hert and in his thought
Her fresshe beaute / and her age tender
Her myddle small/ her armes long & slender
Her wise governaunce/and her gentylnesse
Her womanly bearyng/and her sadnesse
And whan that he was on her condiscended
Him thoght his choise myght nat ben amended
For whan that he him selfe concluded had
Him thought ethe other mannes wyt so bad
That impossyble it were to replye
Ayenst his choice/this was his fantasy
¶ His frendes sent he to/ at his instaunce
And prayeth hem to don him that plesaunce
That hastely they wolde to him come
He wolde abridgen her labour al and some
Nedeth no more for him to go ne ryde
He was apoynted there he wolde abyde
¶ Placebo came/and eke his frendes sone
And alderfirst he badde hem al aboone
That non of hem non argumentes make
Ayenst his purpose that he hath take
Whiche purpose was plesaūt to god (said he)
And very grounde of his prosperite.
He said there was a mayden in the toun
Whiche of beautie hath great renoun
Al were it so/she were of small degre
Sufficeth him her youthe and her beaute
Whiche maydē he said / he wolde haue to wife
To leden in ease and in holynesse his lyfe
And thonketh god/ that he myght haven her all
That no wight his blysse parten shall
And prayeth hem to labour in this nede
And shapeth that he fayle nat to spede
For than he said/ his spyrite was at ease
Than is (qd̄ he) nothyng may me displese
Saue o thyng pricketh in my conscience
The whiche I wol reherse in your presence.
¶ I haue (quod he) herde said full yore ago

After

There may no man haue parfite blysses two
This is to say/in erthe and eke in heuyn
For though he kept him fro the synnes seuyn
And eke from euery braunche of thilke tre
yet is there so parfite prosperite
And so great ease and lust in mariage
That euer I am agast nowe in myn age
That I shal lede nowe so merry a lyse
So delycate without wo or stryfe
That I shall haue myne heuen in erthe here
For sithen verey heuen is bought so dere
With tribulation and great penaunce
Howe shulde I than lyuyng in such plesaunce
As all wedded men done with her wyues
Lõe to the bliss/ ther Crist eterne on lyue is
This is my drede/ and ye my brethern twey
Assoyleth me this question I you pray.
¶ Iustinus/ whiche that hated his foly
Answered anon right in his iapery
And for he wolde his long tale abrege
He wolde non authorite allege
But said: sir/ so there be non obstacle
Other than this/ god of his hye myracle
And of his mercy may so for you wirche
That er ye han your rightes of holychirche
Ye may repent of wedded mannes lyse
In whiche ye sayn is nyther wo ne stryfe
And eke god forbede/ but if he sent
A wedded man grace hym to repent
Wel ofter/ rather than a syngle man
And therfore sir/ the best rede that I can
Dispeyreth you nat/ but haue in memory
Paraventure she may be your purgatory
She may by goddes meane and goddes whip
Than shal your soule vp to heuen skip
Swifter than dothe an arowe out of a bowe
I hope to god herafter ye shal knowe
That there nys non so great felycite
In mariage/ ne neuer non shal be
That you shal lette of your saluation
So that ye vse it as skyl is and reason
The lustes of your wife attemperatly
And that ye please her nat to amorously
And that ye serue you eke fro other syn
Thy tale is don/ for my wytte is thyn
Beth nat agast herof my dere brother
But lete vs wade fro this mater to another
The wife of Bathe/ if ye vnderstande
Of mariage/ whiche ye haue in hande
Declareth ful wel in a lytell spare
Fareth nowe wel/ god haue you in his grace.
And with this worde/ Iustyne & his brother
Han take her leaue/ and eche of hem of other
For whan they sawe it must nedes be
They wrought so by wise and slye treate
That she this mayde whiche they beght
As hastely as euer that she myght
Shal wedded be to this January
I trowe it were to long to you to tary
yf I you tolde of euery estate and bonde
By whiche she was fessed in his londe
Or for to herken of her riche array
But finally in women is the day
That to chirche both ben they went
For to receyue the holy sacrament
Forth cometh ỳ prest/ wt stole about his neck
And badde her be lyke Sara and Rebecke
In wisedom and trouth of mariage
And said his orisons/ as is the vsage
And crouched hem/ & bad god shuld hem blesse
And made al seker ynowe with holynesse
Thus ben they wedded with solempnyte
And at ferst syttyth he and she
With other worthy folke vpon the dees
Al ful of ioy and blysse is the paleys
And ful of instrumentes and of vitayle
The most deyntes of al Italie
Before him stode instrumẽtes of such sown
That Orpheus/ ne of Thebes Amphion
Ne made neuer suche a melody.
¶ At euery cours came loude mynstralcy
That neuer Ioab tromped for to here
Ne[ither] Theodomas yet halfe so clere
At Thebes/ whan the cyte was in dout
Bacchus the wyne hem sprenketh al about
And Venus laugheth on euery wight
For January was become her knyght
And wolde bothe assayen his corage
In lybertie/ and eke in mariage
And with her fire bronde in her honde about
Daunceth before the bride and al the rout
And certainly/ I dare wel sayn right this
Emenius that god of weddyng is
Saw neuer his lyfe/ so merry a wedded man

Holde

Holde thou thy peace thou poet Marcian
That writeſt vs that ilke wedding merry
Of hir Philology and him Mercury
And of the ſonges that the Muſes ſonge
To ſmall is bothe thy penne & eke thy tonge
For to deſcryuen of this mariage
Whan tender youth hath wedded ſtouping age
There is ſuche myrth/ ỹ it may nat be written
Aſſayeth your ſelfe/ than may ye witten
If that I lacke ai non in this matere
Way that ſytte/ with ſo benigne a chere
Her to beholde/ it ſemed faiery
Queene Heſter lokede neuer with ſuche an eye
On Aſſuere/ ſo meke a loke hath ſhe
I may you nat deuyſe all her beaute
But thus moche of her beaute tel I may
That ſhe was ſlyke ỹ lyght more we of day
Full ſlyke of al beaute/ and of plesaunce
This January is rauyſſhed in a traunce
And at euery tyme he loked in her face
But in his hert/ he gan her to manace
That he ỹ nyght/ i hes armes wold her ſtreyn
Harder/ than euer Paris dyd Heleyn
But natheles/ yet had he great pite
That thilke night offende her moſt he
And thought alas/ O tender creature
Now wolde god ye myght wel endure
Al my corage/ it is ſo ſharpe and kene
I am agaſt ye ſhal it nat ſuſtene
But god forbede/ that I dyd al my might
Now wolde god that it were waye night
And that the night wolde laſt euer mo
I wolde that al theſe people were a go
And finally he dothe all his labour
As he beſt might/ ſauyng his honour
To haſt hem fro the meat in ſubtel wiſe
The tyme came/ that reaſon was to riſe
And after that men daunced/ & dronke faſt
And ſpices all about the houſe they caſt
And ful of ioye and blyſſe is euery man
Al but a ſquyer/ that hight Damyan
Whiche carfe before the knyght many a day
He was ſo rauiſſhed on his lady May
That for very payne he was nygh wode
Almoſt he ſwolte/ and ſwouned there he ſtode
So ſore hath Venus hurt him with her brãde
As freſſhe ſee was/ and therto ſo lyuande
And to his bedde he went him haſtely
No more of him at this tyme ſpeke I
But there I let him wepe ynow and playne
Tyll the freſſh May wol reuen vs his payne.
O perilous fire/ ỹ in the bedſtraw bredeſt
O ſampler foe/ that ſo fermer bedeſt
O fermant traytour/ falſe homely hewe
Lyke to the adder ſlye in boſome vntrewe
O January dronken in pleſaunce
God ſhelde vs al frõ your iniquitaunce
Of mariage/ ſe how this Damyan
Thyne owne ſquyer and thy boune man
Entendeth to don the villany
God graunt the thyn homely foe to eſpye
For in this worlde nys were peſtilence
Than homely foe/ al day in thy preſence
Parfourned hath the ſon his arke diurne
No lenger may the body of him ſoiourne
Fro occident/ as in that latitude
Night with his mantel/ that is derke & rude
Gan for to ſpreade/ the hemyſpery about
For whiche departed is the luſty rout
Fro January/ with thonke on euery ſyde
Home to her houſes luſtely they tyde
There as they don her thynges/ as hem leſt
And whan they ſawe her tyme to go to reſt
Sone after this luſty January
Wol go to bedde/ he wolde no lenger tary
He dronketh ypocras/ clarrey/ and vernage
Of ſpices hote/ to encreaſe his corage
And many a leccuary had he ful fyne
Suche as the curſed monke dan Conſtantyne
Hath written in his boke of Coitu
To eten hem al he nolde nothyng eſchewe
And thus to his priuy frendes ſaid he
For goddes ſoule/ as ſone as it may be
Let voyde all this houſe in curteys wiſe ſone
Whan dronken/ and the trauers drawe anon
So haſted January/ it muſt be done
The bride was brought to bed as ſtyl as ſtone
And whan the bed was with ỹ preeſt ibleſſed
Out of the chãbre hath euery wight hem dreſſed
And January hath faſt in armes take (ſed
His freſſhe May/ his paradiſe/ his make
He lulleth her/ he kyſſeth her ful ofte
With thicke lyſtes of his berde vnſofte
Lyke ỹ ſkyn of Houndefiſh/ as ſharp as bryre

For

For he was shaue al newe in his manere
He rubbeth her vpon her tendre face
And said thus: Alas/ I mote trespace
To you my spouse/ and you greatly offende
Or tyme come/ that I wol do wyn disernde
But natheles/ consideryth this (q̃d he)
There nys no workman/ what so euer he be
That may bothe wirche wel and hastely
This wol be don at leyser parfitly
It is no force how we long that we play
In trewe wedlocke coupled be we twayn
And blessed be the yoke that we been in
For in our actes we mowe do no syn
A man may do no synne with his wife
Ne hurt him selfe with his owne knyfe
For we haue leaue to play vs by the lawe
Thus labouryth he/ tyll the day gan dawe
And than he taketh a soppe in fyne clarre
And vpright in his bedde than sytteth he
And after that he syngeth ful loude and clere
And vyfi his wife/ and maketh wanton chere
He was al coltishe/ and ful of ragery
And ful of gergon/ as is a flecked pye
The slacke skynne about his necke shaketh
While that he songe/ so chaunteth he & craketh
But god wot what May thought in her herte
When she him sawe/ vp sytting in his sherte
In his night cappe/ with his necke lene
She prayseth not his playeng worth a bene
Than said he thus: my rest wol I take
Now the day is come/ I may no lenger wake
And dowyn he layde his heed/ & slept tyl prime
And after warde/ whan that he sawe his tyme
Vp riseth January/ but the fresshe May
Holdeth her chambre to the fourth day
As vsage is of wyues for the best
For euery labour somtyme mote haue rest
Or elles longe may he not endure
This is to say/ no kynes creature
Be it fisshe or beest/ bridde or man
Now wol I speke of wofull Damian
That langureth for loue/ as ye shal here
Therfore I speke to him in this manere.
¶ I say/ O sely Damian/ alas
Answere to this demaunde/ as in this cas
How shalt thou to thy lady fresshe May
Tell thy wo: she wol alway say nay
Eke if thou speke/ she wol thy wo bewray
God be thyn helpe/ I can no better say
This sicke Damian in Venus fyre
So brenneth/ that he dieth for desyre
For whiche he put his life in auenture
No lenger might he in this wise endure
But pryuely a penner gan he borowe
And in a lettre wrote he al his sorowe
In maner of a complaynt or a lay
Vnto this faire and fresshe lady May
And in a purse of silke/ hongyng on his sherte
He hath it put/ and layde it at his herte
¶ The mone at noon tyde that ilke day
(That January hath wedded fresshe May)
Out of Taure was in the Lambe gliden
So long hath May in her chambre bidden
As custome is/ vnto these nobles all
A bride shal nat eaten in the hall
Tyll dayes four/ or thre at the lest
Ipassed bey/ than let her goo to rest.
¶ The fourth day cõplete fro noon to noon
Whan that the hye masse was doon
In hall satte this January and May
As fresshe as is the bright somers day
And so befyl/ how we that this good man
Remembreth him vpon this Damian
And said: sayntt Mary/ how may this be
That Damian entendeth not to me?
Is he ayr sicke: or how may this betide?
His squiers/ whiche that stoden him be syde
Excused him/ because of his sikenesse
Whiche letted him to do his besynesse
Non other cause might make him tary
That me forthinketh (q̃d this January)
He is a gentle squyere be my trouthe
If that he died/ it were harme and routhe
He is as wise/ discrete/ and secre
As eny man that I wotte of his degre
And therto manly and seruysable
And for to be a thrifty man right able
But after meate/ as sone as euer I may
I wol my selfe visit him/ and eke May
To do him al the comforte that I can
And for that worde/ him blessed euery wight
That of his bounte and of his gentilesse
He wolde so comforten in his distresse
His squier/ for it was a gentle dede

Dame

Dame (qꝺ this January) take good hede
That after meate/ye and your women all
(Whan ye haue ben in chãbre out of this hal)
That al ye gone to se this Dampan
Dothe him disporte/he is a gentyll man
And telleth him that I wol him visite
Haue I nothyng but rested me a lyte
And spede you fast/ for I woll abyde
Tyll that ye slepe fast by my syde
And with that worde he gan to him call
A squyer/ that was Marshal of his hall
And tolde him certayn thynge that he wolde.
This fresh May hath streight her way ihold
With all her women/ vnto this Dampan
Downe by his beddes syde satte she than
Confortyng him as goodly as she may.
This Dampan/ whan that he his tyme say
In secrete wise/his purse and eke his gyll
(In whiche he had written al his wyll)
Hath put in to her honde withouten more
Saue that he sighed wonders depe and sore
And sothly / to her right thus said he
Mercy/ and that ye discouer nat me
For I am dead/if that this thyng be kydde
This purse hath she in her bosome hydde
And went her way/ye gete no more of me
But vnto January is come is she
And of his beddes syde she sytte ful softe
He taseth her/and kyssed her ful ofte
And layde him downe to slepe/ & that anon
She fayned her/ as that she must gon
There as ye wote/ that euery wight hath nede
And whan she of this byl hath taken hede
She rent it al to clouttes/ and at last
In to the preuy/ sothly she it cast.
Who studieth nowe but faire fresshe May?
And adown by January she lay
That slepte/ tyll the cough hath him awaked
Anon he prayde her to strype her all naked
He wolde of her (he said) haue some plesaunce
He said her clothes dyd him encombraunce
And she obeyeth be she lefe or lothe
But lest that precious folke be wt me wrothe
Nowe that he wrought/ I dare nat to you tell
Or whether she thought it paradise or hell
But I lette euery worthe in his wyse
Tyl empsong rong/ that they must arise.
Were it by destenye or by aduenture
Were it by influence/ or by nature
Or constellation that in suche estate
The heuen stode/ that tyme fortunate
(Was for to put a gyll of Venus werkes)
For al thyng hath tyme/ as sayn clerkes
To any woman for to gete her loue
I can nat say/but the great god aboue
That knoweth/ that noyn acte is causeles
He demeth all/ for I wol holde my pees.
But sothe is this / howe ỳ this fresshe May
Hath take suche impression that day
Of pyte/ on this sicke Damyan
That fro her hert she dryue ne can
The remembraunce for to doy him ease
Certain (thought she) whom this thig displease
I recke nat/ for this I him assure
I loue him best of any creature
Though he no more had than his shert.
Lo pyte renneth soone in gentyll hert
Here may ye se/ howe excellent franchise
In women is/ whan they hem narowe auyse
Some tyrant is/as there ben many one
That hath an hert as harde as any stone
Whiche wolde haue lete him sterue in ỳ place
Wel rather than haue graunted him her grace
And her reioysed in her cruell pride
And nat haue recched to ben an homycide.
This gentyll May/ fulfylled of al pyte
Right so of her honde a lettre made she
In whiche she graunteth him her very grace
There lacketh nought/but onely tyme & place
Where that she might to his lust suffise
For it shal be/ right as he wol deuyse
And whan she saw her tyme vpon a day
To visite this Damyan goth this faire May
And subtelly this lettre doyn she thrist
Vnder his pylowe/ rede it if him lyst
She taseth him by the hode/ & herd him twist
So secretely/ that no wight of it wist
And badde him ben al hole/ & forth she went
To January/ whan that he for her sent.
Vp riseth Damyan the neyt morowe
All passed was his sickenesse and his sorowe
He kembeth him and proyneth him & pyketh
And doythe all that his lady lust and lyketh
And eke to January he goythe as lowe

As euer dyd a dogge for the bowe
He is so plesaunt to euery man
For craste is all/ who that it can
That euery wight is fayn to speken him gode
And fully in his ladies grace he stode
Thus sette I Dampan about his nede
And in my tale/ forthe I woll procede.
¶ Some clerkes holden that felycite
Stont in delyte/ and therfore certayn he
This noble January with all his myght
In honest wise, as longeth to a knyght
Shope him to lyue full delycyously
His housyng/ his array/ as honestly
To his degre/ was made as a kynges
Among other of his honest thynges
He had a garden walled all with stone
So faire a garden was there neuer none
For out of dout/ I verily suppose
That he that wrote the Romaunt of the Rose
Ne couth of it the beaute well deuyse
Ne Priapus/ ne myght nat suffise
Though he be god of gardens/ for to tell
The beaute of the garden/ and of the well
That stont vnder a laurer alway grene
Full ofte tyme kyng Pluto and his quene
Proserpina/ and all her fayrie
Disporten hem/ and maken melody
About that well/ and daunced as men tolde
This noble knight/ this January the olde
Suche deynte hath/ in it to walke and play
That he woll suffre no wight to bere the kaye
Saue he him selfe/ for the small wicket
He bare alway of syluer a clycket
With whiche/ whan that him lyst vnshet
And whan that he wolde pay his wife her det
In somer season/ thider wolde he go
And May his wyfe/ and no wight but they two
And thinges which that were nat don a bedde
He in the garden pfourmed hem and spedde
And in this wise/ many a mery day
Lyued this January and this fresshe May
But worldly ioye may nat alway endure
To January/ ne to no lyuyng creature.
¶ O sodayne hap/ O thou fortune vnstable
Lyke to the Scorpion desceyuable
That flatrest w^t thy hed whan p^u wolt stige
Thy tayle is dethe/ thrugh thyn enuenompyng
O brotell ioye/ O swete poyson queynt
O monster/ that so sodainly canst peynt
Thy giftes/ vnder the hewe of stedfastnesse
That thou disceyuest bothe more and lesse
Why hast thou January thus desceyued?
And haddest him for thy frende receyued
And now thou hast beraft him bothe his eyen
For sorowe of whiche desireth he to dyen.
Alas/ this noble January that is so free
Amydde his lust and his prosperite
Is woxen blynde/ and all sodainly
His dethe therfore desireth he bitterly
And therwithall/ the fire of ielousy
(Lest that his wife shulde fall in some foly)
So brent his hert/ that he wolde fayne
That some man/ bothe him & her had slayne
For neuer after his dethe/ ne in his lyfe
Ne wolde he that she were loue ne wife
But euer lyue a wedowe in clothes blake
Sole/ as the turtle dothe ỳ hath lost her make
But at the last/ after a month or tway
His sorowe gan to swage/ sothe to say
For whan he wyst it might non other be
He patiently tok̄e his aduersyte
Saue out of dout may he nat for gone
That he nas ielous euer more in one
Whiche ielousy/ it was so outragious
That neyther in hall ne in non other hous
Ne in non other place neuer mo
He nolde suffre her/ neither ride ne go
But if that he had honde on her alway
For whiche full often wepeth fresshe May
That loueth Dampan so benignely
That she mote either dye sodainly
Or els she mote haue him at her lest
She wayteth whan her hert shulde to brest
Vpon that other syde Dampan
Become is/ the sorowfullest man
That euer was/ for neither nyght ne day
Ne myght he speke a worde to fresshe May
As to his purpose of no suche matere
But if that January must it here
That had an honde vpon her euer mo
But nathelesse/ by writyng to and fro
And pretty signes/ wist he what she ment
And she knewe all the sygnes of his entent.
¶ O January/ what myght the it auayle?

The

Tho thou mightest se/ as fer as shippes sayle
For as good is a ploude man vnserued be
As to be vnserued/ whan that a man may se.
Lo Argus/ whiche had an hundred eyen
For all that euer he coulde pore and pyen
Yet was he blent/ and god wotte so ben mo
That weneth wisely that it is nat so
Passe ouer is an ese/ I say no more.
This fresshe May/ of whiche I spake of yore
In warme wise hath purueyed this chirket
That January bare of that smale wirket
By whiche vnto his garden ofte he went
And Dampan that knewe her entent
The chirket counterfayted prively
There nyst no more to say/ but hastely
Some wonder by this chirket shal betyde
Whiche ye shall here/ if ye wol abyde.
O noble Ouide/ sothe sayest thou god wote
What sleight is it/ though it be longe and hote
That he nyll fynde it out in some manere
By Pyramus and Thesbe/ maye men lere
Though they were kept ful long streit ouer al
They ben atwoded/ to wisping thorough a wall
Ther nyst no wight couth fynde such a slaghte
But now to purpose/ er p dayes eighte
Were passed/ er the moneth of Iule wes pll
That January hath caught so great a loyst
Through eggyng of his wife/ him for to play
In his garden/ & no wight but they tway
That in a morowe/ vnto this May said he
Rise vp my wife/ my loue/ my lady free
The turtell voice is herde my lady swete
The winter is gon/ with all his raynes wete
Come forth now we with eyen columbyne
Now sayest ben thy brestes than is wyne
The garden is enclosed all about
Come forthe my white spouse out of dout
Thou hast me wounded in myn hart/ o/ wife
No spotte in the nas in all thy lyf
Come forth and lette vs taken our disport
I chese the for my wife and my confort
Wyse olde lewde wordes vsed he
Dy Dampan a signe made she
That he shulde go before with his cheket
Tho Dampan sone opened this wicket
And in he stert and that in suche maneer
That no wight might it se ne heer
And stylle he sate vnder a bussshe anon.
This January/ as blynde as is a stoon
With May in his honde/ and no wight mo
In to his fresshe garden is he go
And clapte to the wicket sodainly.
Now wife (quod he) here nys but thou & I
That arte the creature that I best loue
For by that lorde that sitte vs all aboue
I had leuer dyen on a knyfe
Than the offende/ dere trewe wife
For goddes sake thynke how I the chees
Nat for coueitise/ ne otherwise doutelees
But only for the loue I had to the
And though that I be olde and may nat se
Be to me trewe/ and I wol tell you why
Certes/ thre thynges shall ye wyn therby
First loue of Christ/ & to your selfe honour
And all myn heritage/ to wyn and toure
I gyue it you/ maketh charters as ye list
This shall be don to morowe er sonne ryst
So wisely god my soule bring to blysse
I pray you on couenaunt that ye me kysse
And though that I be ielous wite me nought
Ye ben so depe enprented in my thought
That whan I consyder your beaute
And therwithall/ the vnlykly elde of me
I may nat certes/ though I shulde dye
Forbere/ to ben out of your compayny
For very loue/ this is withouten doute
Now kysse me wife/ and lette vs rome about
This fresshe May/ whan she these wordes herd
Benygnely to January answerde
But first and forwarde she began to wepe
I haue (quod she) a soule for to kepe
As well as ye/ and also myn honour
And of my wifhode thilke tendre flour
Whiche that I haue enfured in your honde
Whan that the preest to you my body bonde
Wherfore I will answere in this maneere
By the leaue of you my lorde so dere
I pray god that neuer dawe that day
That I for shame/ as soule as woman may
If euer I do to my spouse that shame
Do vile that I am prayse or my name
That I be false/ and if I do that lacke
Do strype me/ and putte me in a sacke
And in the next ryuer do me drenche.

I am a gentyll̃ woman/ and no wenche
Why spese ye thus/ but men ben euer vntrew
And women haue reposse of you/ aye newe
ye can non other cõmunyng/ I leue
But spesse to be of vntrust and reprene
And with ꝑ worde she sawe where Damian
Sate in the busshe/ and vnder he began
And with her fyngers signes made she
That Dampan shulde clymbe vp on a tre
That charged was with fruite/ & vp he went
For verily he knewe all her entent
And euery signe that she couth make
Wedder than January her owne make
For in a letter she had tolde him all
Of thys mater/ how he that he wouth shall
And thus I lete him sytte in the pery
And January and May romyng full mery.
¶ Bygte was the day/ & blewe ꝑ fyrmament
Phebus of golde doun hath his stremes sente
To gladen euery floure with his warmnesse
He was that tyme in Gemyny/ as I gesse
But fyftll fro his declynatyon
The causer of Iouis exaltation
And so befyll that bygte mornwe tyde
That in the garden/ on the farther syde
Pluto/ that is the kyng of Fayrye
And many a lady in his company
Folowyng his wife/ the quene Proserpyne
Ech after other ryght as a lyne
Whiles she gadred floures in a mede
In Claudyan ye may the story rede
How in his grysely carte he hir fette
This kyng of Fayry doun him sette
Upon a benche of turues fressh and grene
And right anon thus said he to his quene.
Wyf wese (quod he) that may nat say nay
The experience so proueth it euery day
The treason/ which that women doth to may
I nne hundred thousande tell I can
Notable/ of your vntrouth and brotelnesse
O Salomon/ wyse of all richesse
Full ꝑfyte of sapience/ and of worldly glory
Full worthy ben thy wordes in memory
To euery wight/ that wytte and reason can
Thus prayseth he the bounte of man
Among a thousande men yet fonde I one
But of all women fonde I neuer none
Thus saith the kyng/ ꝑ knoweth ye wicked-
And Jesus filius Sirach/ as I gesse (nesse
Ne speketh of you but selde trewenesse
A wyfe sire/ a corrupte pestilence
So fall vpon your bodies yet to nyghte
Ne se ye nat this honorable kyngyte?
Because (alas) that he is blynde and olde
His owne man shall maken him cokolde
Lo where he sytte/ the lechour in the tre
How well I graunt of my maieste
Unto this olde blynde worthy kyngyte
That he shall haue ageyn his eye syghte
What that his wyfe wolde ben him vilany
Than shall he know all her harlotry
Both in repreue of her and other mo.
ye shall (quod Proserpyne) and wolle ye so?
Now be my mothers soule sir I swere
That I shall yeuen her sufficient answere
And all women after for her sake
That though they ben in any gylt itake
With face bolde/ they shallen hem selue excuse
And bere hem doun/ that wolde hem accuse
For lacke of answere/ non of hem shall dyen
All had he sen a thyng with both his eyen
yet shulde we women so besage it hardely
And wepe and swere/ and chide subtilly
That ye shall ben as lewde as gees
What recketh me of your auctoritees?
I wotte well this sayde/ thus Salomon
Fonde of vs women fooles many one
But though he ne fonde no good woman
yet there hath ifonde many another man
Women full trewe/ full good/ & full vertuous
Witnesse of hem that dwell in Cristes house
With martyrdom/ they passed her constaunce
The Romain gestes eke make remembraunce
Of many a very trewe wife also
But sir/ be not wroth though it be so
Though that he said he fonde no good woman
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus/ that in souerayn bounte
Nys non but god/ that syteth in trynite.
Eye/ for very god that nys but one
What make ye so moche of Salomon?
What though he made a temple goddes hous?
What though he were riche and glorious?
So made he a temple of false goddes

Holie

How might he day a thyng ? more foolysshe
Parde as faire as ye his name coplayne
He was a lechour/ and an aduoutrere
And in this cyte/ bery god forsoke
And if that god nolde (as saith the boke)
yspared him for his fatheres sake/he shulde
Haue lost his regne sonet than he wolde
I sette nat of all the bokamy
That ye of women wite/ a butterflye
I am a woman/ nedes wote I spoke
Or elce swell/ tyll myn herte breke
For sothen he said/ that we bery wangleresses
Ne euer wote I holy thoghe my tresses
I shall nat spare for no curtesy
To spelle bery harme/ that wolde vs bilany.
Dame (qd̄ than Pluto) be no lenger wroth
I gyue it vp: but sythe I swore myn othe
That I wolde graunt him his sight ayen
My worde shal stande/ I warn I you certayn
I am a kyng/ it sytteth nat to lye.
And I (qd̄ she) a quene of Fayne
Her answere she shall haue I vndertake
Lete vs no mo wordes herof make
Forsoth I wolle no lenger you contrary.
Nowe lette vs turne agayn to January
That in the garden with this faire May
Syngeth merier than the popyngay
You louse I best/ and shall/ and other non
So sang about the alleyes is he gon
Tyll he was comen ayenst thilke pery
Where as this Dampan sitteth full merry
Oh hye/ among these fresshe leues grene.
This fresshe May/ that is so bright & shene
Gan for to sike/ and said: alas my syde
Nowe sir (qd̄ she) for ought that may betyde
I must haue of these perres that I here se
Or I mote dye/ so sore longeth me
To eten of the smalle perres grene
Helpe for her loue that is of heuen quene
I telle you wele a woman in my plyte
May haue to fruite so great an appetyte
That she may dyen/ but she it haue.
Alas (qd̄ he) that I ne had here a knaue
That couth clymbe/ alas/ alas (qd̄ he)
For I am blynde. ye sir no force (qd̄ she)
But wolde ye vouchsafe for goddes sake
Vse pery in your armes for to take
For wele I wotte that ye mysstruste me
Than shulde I clymbe wele ynough (qd̄ she)
So I my foote myght sette vpon your backe
Forsoth said he/ in me shall be no lacke
Myght I you helpe with myn herte blode
He stoupeth down/ & on his backe she stode
And caught her by a twist/ and vp she goth
Ladies I praye you be nat wroth
I can nat glose/ I am a rude man
And sodainly anon this Dampan
Gan pullen vp the smocke/ and in he thronge
A great trot/ a thrifty and a longe
She said it was the meryest fytte
That euer in her lyfe she was at yet
Vp leaden trot serueth me nothyng thus
It sodeth cruelle by swete Jesus
He may nat swyme worth a fle
And yet he is full gentyll and full meke
Hee is lefer to me than an oxenfolde
And whan that Pluto saw this wronge
To January he gaue again his sight
And made him se as well as euer he myght
And whan he had caught his sight again
He was there neuer man of thyng so fayn
But on his wife his thought was euer mo
Vp to the tree he cast his eyen two
And saw how Damian his wife had dressed
In suche manere/ it may nat be expressed
But if I wolde speke vncurtesly
And vp he past a roryng and a crye
As doethe the mother whan the childe shall dye
Out helpe/ alas (harowe) he gan to crye
For sore we almost he gan to dye
That his wife was swyued in the pery
O stronge lady store what dost thou?
¶ And she answered: sir what ayleth you?
Haue patience and reason in your mynde
I haue you holpen of bothe your eyen blynde
Vp peryll of my soule/ I shall nat lyen
As me was taught to helpe with your eyen
Was nothyng bette for to make you se
Than stroke with a man vpon a tree
God wote I dyd it in full good entent
¶ Stroke (qd̄ he) ye algate in it went
Stroke and rounde as any bell
It is no wonder though thy belly swell
The smocke on his backe lay so mesche
And euer me thought he poynted on the busche
God gyue you both on shames bethe to dyen

He swouned thet I saw it with myne eyen
And ete I be hongred by the halse
Than ie (qd she) my medcyn false
For certayn/ if that ye myght se
ye wolde nat say these wordes to me
ye haue some glymsyng/ and no parfite syght
Ise (qd he) as well as euer I myght
Thanked be god/ with both myne eyen two
And by my trouth me thought he dyd so
ye mase ye mase/ good sir (qd she)
This thanke haue I for that I made you se
Alas (qd she) that euer I was so kynde
Now dame (qd he) let al passe out of mynde
Come doun my lefe/ and if I haue myssayde
God helpe me so/ as I am yuell apayde
But by my fathers soule/ I wende haue seyn
Howe that this Damyan had by the leyn
And that thy smocke had layn vpon his brest
ye sir (qd she) ye may wene as ye lest
But sir/ a man that waketh out of his slepe
He may nat sodaunly well taken kepe
Upon a thyng/ ne se it parfitely
Tyll that he be adawed verily

Right so a man that longe hath blynde be
Ne may nat sodaunly so well yse
First whan the sight is newe comen a gayn
As he that hath a depe ar two psayn
Tyll that your sight is stablysshed be a while
There may full many a sight you begyle
Be ware I pray you/ for by heuen kyng
Full many a man wenyth to se a thyng
And it is all another than it semeth
He that mysfroucyeuth ofte mysdemeth
And with that worde she lepe doun fro the tre
This January/ who is glader but he
He kysseth her/ he clyppeth her full ofte
And on her wombe he strokeyth her full softe
And to his paleys home he hath her ladde
Nowe good men I pray you/ beth ye all glad
Thus endeth here my tale of January
God blesse vs al/ and his mother Mary.

¶ Thus endeth the Marchantes tale and here folowyth the wife of Bathes prologue.

Experience/ though none auctorite
Were I this world is right ynow for me
To speke of wo that is in marryage
For lordynges/ syth I twelue yere was of age
Thanked be god/ that is eterne alwyse
Husbondes at chirche dore haue I had fyue

If I so ofte myght haue wedded be
And al were worthy men in her degree.
But me was tolde not longe ago i wyse
That sythen Christ went neuer but onys
To weddyng in the cane of Galilee
That by thilke ensample taught he me
That I ne shulde wedded be/but onys.
Lo herke/ what a sharpe worde for ȳ nones
Besyde a well/ Jesu god and man
Spake in reprefe of the Samaritan
Thou hast had fyue husbandes (quod he)
And that he/ the man that nowe hath the
Is not thyne husbonde: thus said he certayn
What he ment therby I can not sayn
But that I aske/ why the fyfte man
Was not husbonde to the Samaritan
How many myght she haue in marrage?
yet herde I neuer tellen in myne age
Upon this nombre ther we disputison
Men may deuyne/ and glosen vp and down
But well I wotte expresse without lye
God bade vs for to wexe and multiply
That gentyll text can I well vnderstonde
Eke well I wotte (he said) myn husbonde
Shuld leaue father & mother/ and take to me
But of nombre no mention made he
Of bigamye or of octogamye
Why shuld men speke of it villany?
Lo he the wise kyng Dalomon
I trowe had wyues mo than one
As wolde god it lefull were to me
To be refreshed halfe so ofte as he
Which a gifte of god had he/ for all his wyues
No man hath such/ ȳ in this worlde a fyue is
God wotte this noble kyng/ as to my wytte
The first nyght had many a mery fytte
With eche of hem/ so wel was him a fyne
Blessed be god/ I haue had fyue
Welcome the fyfte whan euer he shal
For sothe I wol not kepe me chaste in al
Whan myn husbonde is fro the worlde ygon
Some cristen man shal wedde me anon
For than the apostel sayth/ that I am fre
To wedde a goddes halfe/ where it lyketh me
He sayth/ that to be wedded is no synne
Better is to be wedded than to brinne
What recheth me though folke say vilany
Of shrewde Lamech/ and of his bigamy
I wotte wel Abraham was an holy man
And Jacob eke/ as fer as euer I herde can
And eche of hem had wyues mo than two
And many another holy man also
Where can ye say in any manere age
That euer god defended mariage
By expresse worde? I pray you tell me
Or where commaunded he virginite?
I wotte as wel as ye/ it is no drede
The Apostell/ whan he spake of maydenhede
He said/ therof precept had he none
Men may counsayle a woman to be one
But counsayling is no commaundement
He put it in our owne iugement
For had god commaunded maydenhede
Than had he damned wedding out of drede
And certes/ if there were no sede ysowe
Virginite than wherof shulde it growe?
Poule durste not commaunde at the leste
A thing/ of which his mayster yaf none heste
The darte is set vp for virginite
Catche who so may/ who renneth beste let se.
But this worde is not take of euery wyght
But there as god lyst yeue it of his myght
I wotte wel that the apostel was a mayde
But nathelesse/ though that he wrote & sayde
He wolde that euery wight were suche as he
All nys but counsayle to virginite
And for to be a wyfe he yaue me leue
Of indulgence/ so it be not to repreue
To wedde me/ if that my make dye
Without exception of bygamye
All were it good no woman for to touche
He ment as in his bedde or in his couche
For peryl is/ bothe fyre and tow to assemble
Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble
This is al and some/ he held virginite
More parfyte than wedding in freelte.
Freelte clepe I/ but if that he and she
Wolde lede her lyfe al in chastyte
I graunt it wel/ I haue none enuye
Though maydenhede preferre bygamye
It lyketh hem to be clene in body and goste
Of myne estate I wol make no boste
For wel ye knowe/ a lorde in his housholde

Hath

Hath nat euery Vessell all of golde
Some ben of tree/ and don her lorde seruyce
God clepeth folke to him in sondry wise
And euerriche hath of god a proper gifte
Some this/some that/as him lyketh shifte
Virginyte is great perfection
And contynence eke with deuocion
But Christ/that of perfection is well
Badde nat euery wight he shulde go sell
All that he had/and gyue it to the poore
And in suche wise folowe him and his lore
He spake to hem/that wolde lyue parfitly
And lordinges (by your leaue) that am nat I
I woll bestowe the floure of all myn age
In the actes and frute of mariage
Tell me also/to what conclusyon
Were membres made of generation?
And of so parfite wise a wight ywrought
Trusteth well/they were nat made for nought
Glose who so woll/and saye bp and down
That they were made for purgacioun
Of vryne/and other thynges smale
And eke to knowe a female from a male
And for non other cause/what say ye no?
The experience wotte wele it is nat so
So that the clerkes be nat with me wroth
I saye that they were maked for bothe
This is to sayn/for office and for ease
Of engendrure/there we nat god displease
Why shulde men elles in her bokes sette
That mans shulde yelde to his wife her dette
Now wherwith shuld he pay his payment?
If he ne vsed his selp instrument
Than were they made vpon a creature
To purge vryn/and eke for engendrure
But I say nat/that euery wight is holde
That hath suche harnesse/as I to you tolde
To goon and vsen hem in engendrure
Than shulde men take of chastite no cure
Christ was a mayde/and shapen as a man
And many a saynt/sithen the worlde began
Yet lyued they euer in parfyte chastite
I nyll enuy no virginyte
Lette hem with bredde of pure whete be fedde
And lette be wyues eate barly bredde
And yet with barly bred/Marke tell can
Our lorde Jesu refressched many a man
In suche a state as god hath cleped me
I woll perseuer/I nam nat precious
In wedlode woll I vse myn instrument
As freely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous/god gyue me sorowe
Myn husbonde shal it haue both eue and morowe
Whan that him lyst come forth and pay his det
An husbande woll I haue I woll nat let
Which shall be bothe my dettour and my thrall
And haue his tribulation with all
Vpon his flesshe/while that I am his wife
I haue the power during all my lyfe
Vpon his proper body/and nat he
Right thus the apostle tolde to me
And badde our husbondes for to loue me well
All this sentence me lyketh euery dell.

Vp stert the Pardoner/and that anon
Nowe dame quod he/by god and by sayntJohn
Ye ben a noble preachour in this caas
I was about to wedde a wife/alas
What/shulde I bye it on my flesshe so dere?
Yet had I leuer wedde no wife to yere
Abyde qd she/my tale is nat begon
Nay/thou shalte drinke of another ton
Er that I go/shall sauer worse than ale
And whan that I haue tolde forth my tale
Of tribulation that is in marriage
Of which I am expert in all myn age
This is to say/my selfe hath ben the whippe
Than mayst thou chese whider thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne/that I shall sette a broche
Beware of it/er thou to nere approche
For I shall tell ensamples mo than ten
Who so woll nat beware by other men
By him shall other men corrected be
These same wordes writeth Ptholome
Rede in his almagest/and take it there.

Dame I woll pray you/if your wyll were
Said this Pardoner/as ye began
Tell forth your tale/spareth for no man
And teche vs yonge men of your practise
Gladly (qd she) if it may you ayse
But that I pray to all this company
If that I speke after my fantasy
As taketh nat a grefe of that I say
For myn entent is nat but to play
Nowe sirs/than shall I tell forth my tale?

As euer

As euer mote I drinke wyne or ale
I shall say soth. tho husbondes that I had
Thre of hem were good/ and two were bad
The thre good men were riche and olde
Vnnethes myght they the statute holde
In whiche they were bounden vnto me
Ye wotte well what I mean of this parde
As god me helpe/ I laugh whan I thynke
How pitously a nyght I made hem swynke
But by my faye/ I tolde of it no force
They had me yeue her londe and her tresore
Me neded no lenger to do diligence
To wynne her loue/ and do hem reuerence
They loued me so well by god above
That I ne tolde no deyntie of her loue
A wise woman wyll besy her euer in one
To gete her loue/ there as she hath none
But sothen I had hem holy in myn honde
And that they had yeue me all her londe
What/ shulde I taue kepe hem for to plese
But it it were for my profite and myn ese
I sette hem so a worke by my faye
That many a nyght they songen wela way
The bacon was not for hem I trowe
That some men haue in Essex at Dounmowe
I gouerned hem so well after my lawe
That eche of hem full blysful was & fawe
To bring me gay thynges fro the fayre
They were full fayn whan I spake hem faire
For god it wotte/ I chode hem spitously
Now wil ye herken how I bere me properly.
Ye wyse wyues that can vnderstonde
Thus shall ye speke/ and bere hem on honde
For halfe so boldely there can no man
Swere and lye/ as a woman can
I say not this by wyues that ben wyse
Nor of it be/ whan they hem mysse anyse
A wyse wyfe shall/ if that she can her good
Bere hem in honde the crowe is wode
And take witnesse of her owne mayde
Of her assent: but herkeneth how I sayde.
Sir olde kenyarde/ is thus thyn array
Why is myne neyghbours wyfe so gay?
She is honoured ouerall where she goth
I sytte at home/ and haue no outher cloth
What dost thou at my neyghbours house?
Is she so fayre? art thou so amorous?
What rowne st thou ay out our mayd? bencite
Thou olde lechour/ let thy iapes be
And if I haue a gossip or a frende
(without gylte) thou chidest as a fende
If that I walke or play vnto his house
Thou comest home as dronken as a mouse
And prechest on thy benche with yuell preue
Thou sayst to me/ it is a great myschefe
To wedde a poore woman for costage
And if that she be riche of high parage
Thanne sayst thou/ it is a very tormentry
To suffre her pride and her melancoly
And if that she be faire/ thou verey knaue
Thou sayest that euery holour will her haue
She may no while in chastite abyde
That is assayled on euery syde
Thou sayst some folke desyren us for richesse
Some for our shape/ & some for our fairnesse
And some/ for she can eyther synge or daunce
And some for gentylnesse or for dalyaunce
Some for her handes and her armes smale
Thus goth all to the deuyll by thy tale.
Thou sayst men may not kepe a castel wal
It may so long assayled be ouer all
And if that she be soule/ thou sayest that she
Coueyteth euery man that she may se
For as a spanyell/ she wyll on hem lepe
Tyll that she fynde some man yt wyl her chepe
Ne non so gray gose goth there in the lake
(As sayst thou) wyll ben without her make
And sayst/ it is a sorde thyng for to wielde
A wyght that no man wyll him thralle holde.
Thus sayst thou lorel/ whan yt thou gost to bed
That no wysedom techeth for to wedde
Ne no man that entendeth vnto heuyn
With wylde thonder dint and fyre leuyn
Mote thy wicked necke be to broke.
Thou sayst/ dropping houses/ & eke smoke
And chydyng wyues/ maken men to flee
Out of her owne house/ ah/ benedicite
What ayleth folke so euyl man for to lyke?
Thou sayst/ ye wyues wyll ouer sharp syke
Tyll we be dede/ and than we wyl hem shende
Well may suche be a parysshe or a shrewe.
Thou sayst/ it is an yuel ther it is couthe
They ben as fyers as parcas or lyouns
Disparissement of wyues men alway fyndē

Agenst

Spouses/ stoles/ and all suche husbondry
And so be pottes/ clothes/ and arraye
But folke of wyues maken noo assaye
Tyll they ben wedded/ olde dotarde shrewe
And sayst/ how we wol thyn owre lewes shewe
Thou sayest also/ that it displeaseth me
But yf that thou wylte praysse my beaute
And but thou poure alwaye on my face
And clepe me faire dame in euery place
And but thou make a feest on that dere day
That I was borne/ & make me freessche & gay
And but thou dan to my norice honour
And to my chamberer within my bour
And to my fathers folke/ and his allyes
Thus sayest thou olde barrell full of lyes.
And yet of our prentise Iankyn
For his crispe heer/ shynyng as golde fyne
And for he squyreth me bothe vp and doun
Hast thou caught a false suspecioun
I wol him nat/ tho thou were deed to morowe.
But tel me this/ why hidest thou w^t sorowe
The keyes of thy chest away fro me:
It is my good as well as thyn parde
What/ wenest thou make an ydiot of our dame
Now by that lorde/ that called is saynt Iame
Thou shalt nat both though thou were wode
Be maister of my body and of my good
That one y^e shalte forgon maugre thyn eyen
What helpeth it of me to enquere and spyen:
I trowe thou woldest locke me in thy chyst:
Thou shuldest saye: wife/ go where you lyst
Take your disporte/ I wol leue no talys
I knowe you for a trewe wife dame Alys
We loue no man/ that taketh kepe or charge
Where that we go/ we wol be at our large.
¶ Of all men yblessed moste be he
The wise astrologyen dan Ptholome
That saithe this prouerbe in his almageste
Of all men his wisedom is the beste
That recheth not who hath ϸ world in hode.
By this prouerbe thou shalte vnderstonde
Haue thou ynowe/ what parte ϸ take or care
Howe merily that other folke fare
For certes/ olde dotarde by youre leue
Ye shall haue queynt ynowe at eue
He is to great a nygarde that wol werne
A man/ to lyght a candell at his lanterne
He shall haue neuer the lasse lyght parde
Haue thou ynowe/ thou darst nat playn the.
Thou sayest also/ that if we make vs gaye
With clothes/ or with precious arraye
That it is perylle of our chastite
And yet with sorowe/ thou must enforce the
And say these wordes in the apostles name
In habite made with chastite and shame
Ye wommen shulde apparayle you (q^d he)
And nat in tresses heer/ and gay perre
As perlis/ ne with golde/ ne clothes rase
After the text/ ne after thy rybaudye
Inyll not werche as moche as a gnatte.
¶ Thou sayest also/ I was lyke a catte
But who so wolde senge the cattes skynne
Than wolde the catte dwelen in his inne
And if the cattes skyn be slicke and gaye
She nyll nat dwelle in house halfe a daye
But forthe she wyll at any daye be dawed
To shewe her skyn/ and gon a caterwawed.
¶ Thus thou sayest/ yf I be gay for shrewe
I wolle renne out/ my borell for to shewe
Sir olde fole/ what helpeth the to spyen
For though thou pray Argus w^t hus. C. eyen
To be my wardcorps/ as he can best
In faithe he shall nat kepe me but me lest
Yet routh I make his berde/ so mote I the
¶ Thou sayest eke/ that there ben thinges three
The whiche trouble all this erthe
And that no wight may endure the ferth
O lorde sir shrewe/ Iesu shorte thy lyfe
Yet preachest thou/ & sayest: an hatefull wife
Ytreyned is/ for one of these myschaunces
Ben there non other resemblaunces:
That ye may lyken your parables to
But yf a sely wife be one of tho.
Thou lykenest eke/ wommens loue to hell
To barayn londe/ there water may nat dwell
Thou lykenest it also to wylde fyre
The more it brenneth/ the more it hath desyre
To consume any thyng that brent wolde be.
Thou sayest/ right as wormes shende a tre
Right so a wife destroyeth her husbonde
This knowen they that ben to wyues bonde.
¶ Lordinges/ right thus as ye haue vnderstonde
Bare I stifflely myn olde husbande on honde
That thus they sayden in her dronkenesse

And

And all was falfe/but as I toke witneſſe
Of Jenkyn/ and of my nece alſo
O forde the payne I bydd hem/and the wo
Full gylteles by goddes ſwete pyne
For as an horſe/ I couth bothe bite & whyne
I couth playn/ though I were in the gylte
Or elſe oftyn tyme I had ben ſpylte
Who ſo firſt to myſ cometh/ firſt grynt
I playned firſt/ and ſo wan our warre iſtynt
They were ful glad to excuſen hem bilyue
Of thyng/that they a gylt neuer in her lyue
Of wenches wolde I bere hem on honde
whan ꝑ for ſickē/ſomtimes nought they ſtonde
Yet tickled I his hert/ for that he
Wende I had of hem ſo great cheerte
I ſwore/ that al my walkyng out by nyght
Was for to eſpy wenches/ that he dight
Vnder that colour had I mochē my thē
For all ſuche witte/is geuen vs in our birthe
Diſceite/ weping/ ſpynnyng/ god hath gyue
To women/ bothly while that they lyue
And thus of o thyng I may auaunt me
At thende I had the beſt in eche degre
By ſlaught or force/ or by ſome maner thyng
As by contynuall murmure or grutchyng
Namely a bedde had they miſchaunce
There wolde I chide/ & deny hem no pleſaunce
I wolde no knyght in the bedde abyde
(If I felte his arme ouer my ſyde)
Tyll he had made his raunſon vnto me
Than wolde I ſuffre hym do his vprete
And therfore/ euery man this take I tell
Wyne who ſo may/ all ben for to ſell
With empty houdes men may no haukes lure
For wynnyng wolde I all his luſt endure
And make me than a ſayned appetit.
And yet in bacon had I neuer delyte
That maked me ever ꝑ I wolde hem chide
For though the pope had ſtonde hem beſyde
I wolde not ſpare hem at her owne borde
For be my trouth I quyt hem word for worde
As helpe me verey god omnypotent
Tho I ought now me ſhulde make my teſtament
I ne owe hem a worde/ but it is quyte
I bronght it ſo about by my wytte
That they muſt gyue it vp/ or ſo or the beſt
Or elſe had we neuer ben in reſt
For though he lokēd as wode as a hyen
Yet ſhulde he fayle of his concluſyon.
Than wolde I ſay/ good lefe take kepe
How meekely lokeſt wylkyn our ſhepe
Com nere my ſpouſe/ & let me kyſſe your cheke
Ye ſhulde be all patient and meke
And haue a ſwete ſpyced conſcience
Sythe ye ſo preche of Jobbe pacyence
Suffreth al way/ ſith ye ſo well can preche
And but if you do/ We ſhall you teche
That it is faire to haue a wife in pees
One of ba two moſt obeyen bouthes
And ſithe a man is moſt reſonable
Than a woman is/ ye muſt ben ſufferable
What aylēth you to grutche thus and grone?
Is it for ye wolde haue my queynt alone?
Why take it all. lo/ haue it euery dell
Peter I ſhrewe you/ but ye loue it well.
For if I wolde ſell my belechoſe
I couth walke as freſſhe as any roſe
But I woll kepe it for your owne toth
Ye be to blame by god/ I ſay you ſoth
Suche maner wordes had we on honde
Now we woll I ſpeke of my fourth huſbonde.
¶ Wy fourth huſbonde was a reuelour
This is to ſay/ he had a paramour
And I was yong and full of ragery
Stubburne and ſtronge/ and ioly as a pye
Well coude I daunce to an harpe ſmale
And ſyng ywis/ as a nyghtingale
Whan I had dronken a draught of ſwete wyne
Metellius/ the foule churle the ſwyne
That with a ſtaffe byraſte his wife her lyfe
For ſhe dronke wyne: though I had be his wife
Ne ſhulde he not haue daunted me fro dronke
And after wyne of Venus muſt I thynke
For alſo ſekēr/ as colde engendreth hayle
A lycorous mouth muſt haue a lecherous taile
In womon vynolent is no defence
This knowe lechours by experience.
But forde Chriſt/ whan it remembreth me
Vpon my youth/ and my iolyte
It tickleth me about myn hert rote
Vnto this day it doth myn hert bote
That I haue had my worlde/ as in my tyme
But age alas/ that all wol envenyme
Hath me bireft my beaute/ and my pith
Lete

Lette go farwell/the deuyll go ther with
The floure is gon, there nys no more to tell
The bran (as I best can) now we mote I fell
But yet to be right mery wol I fonde
Nowe forth to tel of my fourth husbonde.
¶ I saye I had in hert great despite
That he of any other had delyte
But he was quyt/by god and by saynt Jote
I made him of the same wode a crote
Nat of my body in no foule manere
But certainly/ I made folke suche chere
That in his owyn grece I made him fry
For anger/ and for very ielousy
By god/ in erthe I was his purgatory
For whiche I hope his soule be in glory
For god it wotte/ he satte ful oft and songe
Whan that his shoe ful bytterly him wronge
There was non/ saue god & he/ that wist
In many wise/ how we sore that I him twist
He dyed whan I came fro Hierusalem
And lyeth in graue vnder the Rode beem
All nys his tombe so curious
As was the sepulture of him Darius
Whiche that Appelles wrought so subtelly
It is but waste to bury him preciously
Let him farwell/ god gyue his soule good rest
He is nowe in his graue and in his chest.
¶ Nowe of my fyfth husbonde woll I tell
God sette neuer his soule come in hell
And yet was he to me the most shrewe
That fele I on my ribbes all by rewe
And euer shal/ vntó myn endyng day
But in our bedde he was so fresshe and gay
And therwithall/ he couth so well me glose
Whan that he wolde haue my bele chose
That though he had me bete on euery bone
He couthe wynne ayen my loue anon
I trowe I loued him the better/ for that he
Was of his loue so daungerous to me
We women haue/ if that I shall nat lye
In this matere/ a queynt fantasy
Waite what thyng we may nat lightly haue
Therafter woll we al day crye and craue
Forbyd vs thyng/ and that desyren we
Prese on fast/ and than woll we flee
With daunger bitten we all our chaffare
Great prees at market maketh dere ware
And to great chepe is holde at to lytell price
This know eth euery woman that is wise.
¶ My fyfth husbonde/ god his soule blesse
Whiche I toke for loue and no richesse
He somtyme was a clerke of Oxenforde
And had left schole/ & went at home to borde
With my gossip/ dwellyng in our town
God haue her soule / her name was Alysoun
She knewe my hert/ and eke my preuyte
Better than our parisshe preest so mote I the
To her bewrayed I my counsayle all
For had my husbonde pist a gayn the wall
Or don a thing/ that shulde haue cost his lyfe
To her/ and to another worthy wife
And to my nece/ whiche that I loued well
I wolde haue tolde his counsaile euery dell
And so I dyd full often god it wote
That made his face full oft red and hote
For very shame/ and blamed him oft/ for he
Had tolde to me so great a preuyte.
¶ And so befyll/ that ones in a lent
So oft tyme I to my gossyp went
For euer yet I loued to go gaye
And for to walke in March/ Aprill/ and Maye
From house to house/ to here sondry tales
That Jenkyn clerke/ & my gossyp dame Ales
And I my selfe/ in to the feldes went
My husbonde was at London all that lent
I had the better layser for to play
And for to se/ and eke for to be sey
Of lusty folke/ what wyst I where my grace
Was shapen for to be/ or in what place?
Therfore made I my visytations
To vigilies/ and to processyons
To prechyng eke/ and to pilgrymages
To playes of myracles/ and to mariages
And wered on my gay scarlet gytes
These wormes/ these mought/ ne these mytes
Vpon my parell fette hem neuer a dell
And wost thou why? for they were vsed well
Nowe woll I tell forthe what happed me
I say/ that in the feldes walked we
Fyll trewly we had suche daliaunce
This clerke and I/ that of my purueyaunce
I spake to him/ and said how we that he
If I were wedowe/ shulde wedde me
For certainly/ I sayde for no robaunce

Yet was I neuer without purueyaunce
Of maryage/ne of other thynges ese
I holde a mouse wytte not worthe a lese
That hath but one hole to sterten to
And yf that fayle/than is al ydo.
I bare hym on hande he had enchaūted me
My dame taught me sofsothe that subtylte
And ese I said/ I mette of hym al nyght
He wolde a slayne me/as I laye vpright
And al my bedde was ful of very blood
But yet I hope truely he shuld do me good
For blode betokeneth golde/as I was taught
And al was fals/ I dremed of hym right nauȝt
But as I folowed aye my dames lore
As wel of that/as of other thinges more.
But now we for let me se/ what shal I sayne?
Aha/by god I haue my tale agayne
Whan that my fourth husbāde was on bere
I wepte algate/and made sone chere
As wymes moten/for it is vsage
And with my kerchefe couered my vysage
But for that I was purueyed of a make
I wepte but small/and that I vndertake
To chirch was my husbāde borne on morow
With nepghbours/that for him made sorow
And Jankyn our clerke was one of tho
As helpe me god/whan that I sawe him go
After the bere/me thought he had a payre
Of legges and of fete/ so clene and so fayre
That al my herte I yaue vnto his holde
He was I trowe/twenty wynter olde
And I was fourty/yf that I shal saye sothe
But yet I had alway a coltes tothe
Gaptothed I was/ȝ that became me wele
I had the print of dame Venus sele
As helpe me god/ I was a lusty one
And fayre/ riche/and yonge/ and wel bygone
And truely/as myn husbonde told me
I had the beste quoyne that myght be
For certes I am al fully Dennysh
In felyng/and my herte is Flemysh
Venus me yaue my lust/ȝ my lyrousnesse
And Mars yaue me my sturdy hardynesse
Myn ascendent was Taure/ȝ Mars therin
Alas alas/that euer loue was synne
I folowed aye myne inclynacion
By vertue of my constellacion
That made me I couthe not withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe
Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face
And also in a nother preuy place
For god so wysly be my saluacion
I loued neuer by no discrecion
But euer folowed myne appetyte
Al were he shorte/longe/ blacke/or whyte
I toke no kepe/so that he lyked me
Howe poore he was/ ne eke of what degre.
What shulde I saye? but at the monthes ende
This ioly clerke Jankyn/that was so hende
Hath wedded me with great solempnyte
And to hym yaue I al the londe and fee
That euer was yeuen me here byfore
But afterwarde repented me ful sore
He nolde suffre nothyng of my lyste
By god he smote me ones with his fyst
For that I rente out of his booke a lefe
That of that stroke/my eres wexe defe
Stubborne I was/as is a lyonesse
And of my tonge a verray iangleresse
And walke I wolde/as I had done byforne
Fro house to house/although he had it swore
For whiche ful ofte tyme wolde he preche
And me of olde Romayn tales teche
Howe he Sulpicius Galbus lefte his wyfe
And her forsoke terme of his lyfe
Not but for open heed he her sey
Lokyng out at his doze on a dey.
A nother Romayn tolde he me by name
That for his wyfe was at a sōmer game
Without his wetyng/he forsoke her ese
And than wolde he vpon his Dyble seke
That ilke prouerbe of Ecclesiaste
Where he comaundeth/and forbyddeth faste
A mā shal not suffre his wife go ropte aboute
Than wolde he say right thus out of doute
¶ Who so buyldeth his house al of salowes
And pacheth his hynde horse ouer ȳ salowes
And suffreth his wyfe for to seche hallowes
He is worthy to be hanged on the gallowes.
But al for nought/ I sette not an hawe
Of his prouerbes/ne of his olde sawe
Ne I wolde not of him corrected be
I hate him that my vices telleth me
And so do mo (god wotte) than I

This made him wood with me all vtterly
I nolde nat forbere him in no caas
Now woll I say you soth by sait Thomas
Why that I rent out of his boke a lefe
For whiche he smote me/ that I was defe
He had a boke/ that gladly nyght and daye
For his disporte/ he wolde rede alway
He cleped it Valery/ and Theophrast
At whiche boke he lough alway ful fast
And eke ther was a clerke somtyme at Rome
A cardynall/ that hight saynt Jerome
That made a boke ayenst Jouinian
In whiche boke there was eke Tertulyan
Crisyppus/ Trotula/ and Helowys
That was abbesse nat ferre fro Parys
And eke the parables of Salomon
Ouydes arte/ and bokes many one
And all these were bounden in one volume
And euery nyght and day was his custume
(Whan he had leyser and vacatioun
From other worldly occupatioun)
To reden in this boke of wicked wyues
He knewe of hem mo legendes and lyues
Than ben of good women in the Byble
For trusteth well/ it is an impossyble
That any clerke wolde speke good of wyues
But if it ben of holy sayntes lyues
Ne of non other woman neuer the mo
Who peynted the lyon. tell me who?
By god/ if women had writen stoues
As clerkes han/ within her oratoues (nesse
They wold haue writtyn of men more wickednesse
Than all the mankle of Adam may redresse
The childre of Mercury and Venus
Ben in her workyng full contrarious
Mercury loueth wisedom and science
And Venus loueth riot and dispence
And for her diuers disposition
Eche falleth in others exaltation
And thus god wotte/ Mercury is desolate
In Pisces/ where Venus is exaltate
And Venus falleth where Mercury is reysed
Therfore no woman of no clerke is preysed
The clerke whan he is olde/ & may nought do
Of Venus werkes/ nat worth his olde shoe
Than sytte he downe/ and write in his dotage
That women can nat kepe her mariage

But now we to purpose/ why I tolde the
That I was beten for a boke parde
Upon a nyght Jenkyn/ that was our syre
Redde vpon his boke/ as he sate by the fyre
Of Eue first/ that for her wickednesse
Was all mankynde brought to wretchednesse
For whiche ỳ Jesu christ him selfe was slayn
That bought vs with his herte blode agayn
Lo here expresse of women may ye fynde
That woman was the losse of all mankynde
Tho rad he me how Sampson lost his heres
Slepping/ his lemman cut hem with her sheres
Thorow whiche treson lost he bothe his eyen
Tho rad he me/ if that I shall nat lyen
Of Hercules/ and of his Dianyre
That caused hym to sette him selfe a fyre
Nothyng forgate he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wyues two
How that Xantippe cast pysse on his herd
This sely man sate stylle/ as he were dead
He wyped his heed/ no more durst he sayn
But er the thonder stynt there cometh rayn
Of Pasyphae/ that was queene of Crete
For shrewednesse him thought that tale swete
Fye/ spek no more/ it is a grisely thyng
Of her horrible lust and her lykyng
Of Clytemnestra for her lechery
That falsely made her husbande for to dye
He rad it with ful good deuocion
He tolde me eke/ for what occasyon
Amphioraus at Thebes lost his lyfe
Ye husbonde had a legende of his wyfe
Eriphilem that for an ouche of golde
Hath prively vnto the grekes tolde
Where that her husbonde hyd him in a place
For whiche he had at Thebes sory grace
Of Lyma tolde he me/ and of Lucy
They both made her husbondes for to dye
That one for lowe/ that other was for hate
Lyma her husbonde on an euyn late
Empoysoned had/ for that she was his foe
Lucia lykerous loued her husbonde so
That for he shulde alway vpon her thynke
She gaue him suche a lowe maner drynke
That he was dede/ er it were morowe
And thus agates husbondes han sorowe
Than tolde he me/ how one Latumius

Complayned

Complayned to his felowe Arius
That in his garden grewed fuche a tree
Dn whiche (he fayd) that his wyues thre
Hanged hem felfe for herte disposous
O lefe brother (qõ this Arius)
Yeue me a plant of this blyffull tree
And in my garden planted fhall it be.
Of later date of wymen hath he rede
That fome han flayn her husbondes in bedde
And let her lechour dight hem all the nyght
Whiles that the cors lay in flore vpright
And fome had depue nayles in her brayn
Whiles they flepe/ & thus they haue hem flayn
Some haue yeue hem poyfon in her drinke
He fpake more harme than herte may thynke
And therwithall he knewe mo prouerbes
Than in this worlde there grow with grafle or
Bette is (qõ he) thyne habitation (herbes
Be with a lyon/ or a foule dragon
Than with a woman vfyng for to chyde
Bette is (qõ he) hegh in the roof to abyde
Than with an angrye wife do wn in an house
They ban fo wicked and fo contrarious
They hate/ that her husbondes foury eye
He fayd/ a woman cafl her fhame away
Whan fhe cafl of her fmocke: and farther mo
A farre woman/ but fhe be chafl alfo
Ln fyght a galde rynge on a fowes nose
Who coude wene/ or who coude fuppofe
The wo/ that in myne herte was and pyne
And whan I fawe he wolde neuer fyne
To reden on this curfed boke all nyght
All fodamply thre leaues haue I plyght
Out of his boke/ right as he radde/ and eke
I with my fyft fo toke him on the cheke
That in the fire he fell backwarde adoun
And vp he ftert/ as doth a wode lyoun
And with his fyft he fmote me on myn herd
That in the flore I lay as I were deed
And whan he fey how ftyll that I lay
He was a gaft/ and wolde haue fledde away
Tyl at the laft out of my fwoun I brayde
Oh/ haft thou flayn me falfe theef I fayde
For my londe thus haft thou murdred me?
Er I be deed/ yet wolle I anes kyffe the
And nere he cam/ and kneled faire adoun
And fayd: dere fyfter/ forgeue thy foun
As helpe me god I fhall the neuer fmyte
That I haue don/ it is thy felfe to wyte
Forgyue it me/ and that I the befeche
And yet eftfones I hytte him on the cheke
And fayde: theef/ thus mocheft am I be wreke
Now wel I dye/ I may no lenger fpeke.
But at the laft/ with mokell care and wo
We fell acorded within our feluen two
He yaf me all the bridell in myn honde
To haue the gouernaunce of houfe & londe
And of his tonge/ and of his honde alfo
And made him bren his boke anon tho
And whan I had goten vnto me
By maiftry/ all the foueraynte
Than he fayd: myne owyn trewe wife
Dothe as thou lyfte/ the terme of all thy lyfe
Kepe thyne honour/ and eke myn eftate
After that day we had neuer debate
God helpe me fo/ I was to him as kynde
As any wife fro Denmarke vnto Inde
And alfo trewe/ and fo was he to me
I praye to god/ that fytte in maieftie
So blyffe his foule/ for his mercy dere
Now wol I fay my tale if ye woll here.
¶ The frere lough whan he had herd all this
Now dame (qõ he) fo haue I ioye or blyffe
This is a long preamble of a tale
And whan the Sompner herde ꝑ frere gale
Lo (qõ this fompner) by goddes armes two
A frere woll entermete him euermo
Lo good men/ a fyft and eke a frere
Woll fall in euery dyfhe and eke matere
What fpeueft thou of preambulation?
what amble or trot/ether peare or fyt a doun
Thou lettyft our difporte in this matere.
¶ Ye woll thou fo ꝑ Sõpner (qõ the frere)
Now by my faye I fhall/ er that I go
Tell of a Sompner/ fuche a tale or two
That all the folke fhall laugh in this place.
Now elis frere I befeche the thy face
(Quod this fompner) and I the befeche
But if I tell tales two or thre
Of freres/ er I come to Sittyngburne
That fhall make thyne herte for to murne
For wel I wotte thy pacience is goon.
¶ Our hoost cried peace/ and that anoon
And fayd: Lete the woman tell her tale

ye farry as folke / that dronken ben of ale
Do dame/tel forthe your tale/ & that is beste
Al redy sir (quod she) right as you leste
If I haue lyerne of this worthy frere
Yes dame/tel forthe your tale/ I wol it here.

¶ Here endeth the wyfe of Bathes prologue / and here be-gynneth her tale.

In the olde dayes of kyng Arthoure
(Of which þ Britons speken great honour)
Al was this londe fulfylled of fairy
The Elfe quene/ with her ioly company
Daunsed ful ofte in many a grene mede
This was the olde opinyon as I rede
I speke of many an hundred yere a go
But now can no man se none elfes mo
For now the great charyte and prayeres
Of lymytours and other holy freres
That serchen euery lande and euery streme
As thicke as motes in the sonne beme
Blissyng halles/chambres/kichens/ & bowres
Cytees/ boroweS/ castelles/and hye toures
Thropes/ bernes/shepens/and deyries
This maketh/that there ben no fayries
For there as wonte to walke was an elfe
There walketh now the lymytour him selfe
In vndermeles/and in morwynges
And saythe his matyns / & his holy thynges
As he gothe in his lymytacioun
Women may go safely vp and doun
In euery bussche/and vnder euery tre
Ther nys none other incubus but he
And he ne wyl doute hem no dishonour.
¶ And so fel it/that this kyng Arthour
Had in his house a lusty bachelor
That on a day come ridyng fro the ryuer
And happed/that alone as he was borne
He sawe a mayde walkyng him byforne
Of whiche mayde anoyed/maugre her hede
(By verey force) he bereft her maydenhede
For whiche oppressyon was swiche clamour
And swiche pursute vnto kyng Arthour
That dampned was this knight to be deed
By course of lawe/ & shulde haue lost his heed
Peraduenture swiche was the statute tho
But that the quene/ and other ladyes mo
So longe prayden the kyng of grace
Tyl he his lyfe graunted in that place
And gaue him to the quene/ al at her wyll
To chese whether þ she wolde him saue or spyll
The quene thanketh þ kyng with al her myght
And after this/thus spake she to the knight
Whan she sey her tyme on a day.
¶ Thou standest yet (quod she) in swiche aray
That of thy lyfe yet hastu no suerte
I graunte the thy lyfe/ yf that thou canst tel me
What thyng is it/that women most desyren
Beware/ and kepe thy necke bone from yren
And yf thou canste not tel it me anon
yet wol I yeue the leue for to gon
A twelue moneth and a day/to seke and lere
An answere suffysyent in this matere
And surtie wol I haue/ er that thou passe
Thy body for to yelde in this place.
¶ Wo was the knight/ & sorowfully he syketh
But what: he may not don al as him lyketh
And at laste he chese him for to wende
And come ayen/right at the yeres ende
With such answer/ as god wolde him purueye
And taketh his leue/ & wendeth forth his weye
He seketh euery house and euery place
Where as he hopeth for to fynde grace
To lerne/what thyng women louen moost
But he ne couthe arryuen in no coost
Where as he might fynde in this matere
Two creatures acordyng yfere
Some sayd/women loued best rychesse
Some sayd honour/some sayd iolynesse
Some sayd nyce aray/some sayd lust a bedde
And ofte tyme to ben wydowe and wedde
Some sayd/ that our herte is most yreysed
Whan that we ben flatered and yplesed
He gothe ful nye the sothe/ I wol not lye
A man shal wynne vs best with flaterye
And with attendaunce/and with busynesse
Ben we ylymed bothe more and lesse.
And some men sayn/how we þ we louen best
For to ben fre/and do right as vs leste
And that no man repreue vs of our vyce
But sey that we be wyse/ & nothyng nyce
For truly there nys none of vs all
If any wight wol clawe vs on the gall

That

That we nyll kyfle/ for that he faith So fothe
Aſſaye/ and he ſhall fynde it/ that ſo dothe
For be we neuer ſo vicious within
We woll be holden wyſe and clene of ſyn.
And ſomme maner ſaye/ þ great delite haue we
For to ben holde ſtable and eke ſtere
And in o purpoſe ſtedfaſtly to dwell
And nat be wauy thyng that men vs tell
But that taſe is nat worthe a rake ſtele
Parde we women can nothyng hele
Wytneſſe of Midas/ wolde ye here the taſe?
¶ Ouyde/ among other thynges ſmale
Said/ Midas had vnder his long heeres
Growyng on his heed/ two aſſes eeres
The whiche vice he hidde/ as he beſt myght
Full ſubtelly from euery mannes ſyght
That ſaue his wyfe/ there wiſt of it no mo
He loued her moſt/ and truſted her alſo
He prayde her/ that to no creature
She nolde telleny of his diſfygure.
She ſwore nay/ nat for al þ worlde to wyn
She nolde do that vilany/ ne that ſyn
To make her huſbonde haue ſo foule a name
She nolde nat tell it for her owyn ſhame
But natheleſs/ her thought that ſhe dyde
That ſhe ſo long ſhulde a counſaile hyde
Her thought it ſwelle ſo ſore about her hert
That nedely ſome worde ſhe moſt a fiert
And ſith ſhe durſt telleny it to no man
Downy to a marys faſt by ſhe ran
Tyll ſhe came there/ her hert was on a fyre
And as a bitture bumbleth in the myre
She layde her mouth vnto the water adowne
Betwray me nat thou water with thy ſowne
Quod ſhe/ to the I telle it/ and to no mo
My huſbonde hath long Aſſes eres two
Now is myn hert all hole/ now it is out
I myght no lenger kepe it out of dout.
¶ Here may we ſe/ though we a tyme abyde
yet out it moſte/ we can no counſayle hyde
The remenaunt of the taſe/ if ye wyl here
Redeth Ouyde/ and there ye may it lere.
¶ This knyght/ of whoſe vyl taſe I ſpeke ay
Whan that he ſawe/ he myght not come therby
This is to ſay/ what women loven moſte
Within his herte ſore he gan to moſte
But homward he gothe/ he myght not ſomme
The day was come/ he moſte home returne
And in his way/ it happed hym to ryde
In al his care/ vnder a foreſte ſyde
Where he ſawe upon a daunce go
Of ladyes fourte and twenty/ and yet mo
Toward the dauce he dyd we hym/ a that perme
In hope that ſome wyſedome ſhulde he lerne
But certainly/ er that he came fully there
Vaniſſhed was the dauce/ he nyſte nat where
No creature ſawe he that bare lyfe
Saue in þ grene/ he ſaw ſytting an olde wyfe
A fouler wyght there may no man deuyſe
Agayne the knyght the olde wyfe gan aryſe
And ſayd: ſir knyght/ here forthe lyeth no way
Tel me what ye ſeken by your ſay
Parauenture it may the better be
Thise olde folke conne moche thing (qd ſhe)
¶ My leſe mother (qd this knyght) certayne
I nam but dede/ but if that I can ſayne
What thing it is/ that women moſte deſyre
Loude ye me wiſſe/ I wold quite wel yo' hire
Plight me thy trouth here in my hond (qd ſhe)
The neyt thing that I requere the
Thou ſhalte it do/ if it be in thy myght
And I wol tel it you/ or it be nyght.
Haue here my trouth (qd þ knyght) I graunt
¶ Than quod ſhe/ I may me wel auaunt
Thy lyfe is ſafe/ for I wol ſtonde therby
Upon my lyfe/ the queue wyl ſay as I
Let ſe/ whiche is the proudeſt of hem all
That weareth on a kercheſe or a call
That dare ſay nay/ of that I ſhal you reche
Let vs go forthe without lenger ſpeche.
Tho rowned ſhe a pitiſel in his ere
And bade hym to be glad/ and haue no fere.
¶ Whan they be come to þ court/ this knyght
Sayd/ he had holde his day/ as he had hyght
And redy was his anſwere/ as he ſayde
Ful many a noble wyfe/ and many a mayde
And many a wydowe/ for that they be wyſe
(The quene her ſelfe/ ſytting as a iuſtyſe)
Aſſembled ben/ his anſwere for to here
And afterwarde this knyght was bode apere.
To euery wyght commaunded was ſylence
And that the knyght ſhulde tel in audyence
What thing that worldely women loued beſt
This knyght ne ſtode not ſtyl as doth a beſte

But to his queſtion anon anſwerde
With manly voyce/ that al the courte it herde
My liege lady: generally/ quod he
Women deſyren to haue ſouerayntee
As well ouer her huſbondes as her loue
And for to ben in maiſtrye hem aboue
This is your moſte deſyre/ though ye me kyll
Doth as you lyſte/ I am here at your wyll.
¶ In al the courte nas there wyfe ne mayde
Ne wydowe/ that contraryed/ that he sayde
But ſayd/ he was worthy haue his lyfe.
And with ỳ worde/ vp ſterte the olde wyfe
Whiche ỳ the knight ſonde ſytting on ỳ grene
Mercy (qd̄ ſhe) my ſouerayne lady quene
Er that your courte departe do me right
I taught this anſwere vnto this knight
For whiche he plight me his trouthe there
The firſt thing I wolde of him requere
He wolde it do/ if it lay in his myght
Before the courte than praye I the ſir knyght
(Quod ſhe) that thou me take vnto thy wyfe
For wel thou woſte/ that I haue kept thy lyfe
If I ſay falſe/ ſaye nay vpon thy ſay.
¶ This knight anſwerd/ alas and welaway
I wote right well/ that ſuche was my beheſte
For goddes loue cheſe a newe requeſte
Take al my good/ and let my body go.
Nay qd̄ ſhe/ than I ſhrewe vs bothe two
For though that I be foule/ olde/ and poore
I nolde for al the metall ne the ore
That vnder erthe is graue/ or lythe aboue
But if I thy wyfe were and thy loue.
¶ My loue (quod he) nay my dampnation
Alas that any of my nacion
Shulde euer ſo foule diſparaged be
But al for naught/ the ende is this/ that he
Cõſtrayned was/ ỳ nedes muſt he her wedde
And taketh this olde wyfe/ & gothe to bedde.
¶ Nowe wolden ſome men ſay paraunture
That for my negligence/ I do no cure
To tellen you the ioye and the array
That at the feeſt was that ylke day.
To the whiche thing anſwere ſhortly I ſhal
I ſay there was no ioy ne feeſt at al
There nas but heuyneſſe and moche ſorowe
For pryuely he wedded her on a morowe
And al day after hydde him as an owle
So wo was him/ his wyfe loked ſo foule.
Gret was ỳ ſorow ỳ knight had in his thought
Whan he was with his wyfe a bedde ibrought
He walo weth/ and turneth to and fro.
¶ His olde wyfe lay ſmyling euermo
And ſayd: O dere huſbonde/ O benedicite
Fareth euery knight thus as ye?
Is this the lawe of kyng Arthures houſe?
Is euery knyght of his ſone ſo daungerouſe?
I am your owne loue/ and eke your wyfe
I am ſhe/ whiche that ſaued hath your lyfe
And certes yet dyd I neuer you vnright
Why fare ye thus with me the firſt nyght
Ye faren lyke a man that had loſte his wyte
Fy/ what is my gilte: for goddes loue tel me it
And it ſhal be amended if I may.
¶ Amended (qd̄ this knyght) alas nay nay
That wol not ben amended neuer mo
Thou arte ſo lothly/ and ſo olde alſo
And therto comen of ſo lowe a kynde
That litel wõder is though I walowe & wynde
So wolde god (qd̄ he) myn herte wolde breſt.
¶ Is this (qd̄ ſhe) the cauſe of your vnreſt?
Ye certaynly quod he/ no wonder nys.
¶ Nowe ſir (qd̄ ſhe) I couthe amende al this
If that me lyſt/ er it were dayes thre
So wel ye myght bere you vnto me.
But for ye ſpeke of ſuche gentylneſſe
As is deſcended out of olde richeſſe
That therfore ſhullen ye be gentilmen
Suche arrogaunce is not worthe an hen.
Lo who that is moſte vertuous alway
Priuy and apert/ and moſte entendeth aye
To do the gentill dedes/ that he can
Take him for the greteſt gentilman.
Chriſt wolde we claymed of him o3 gentilneſſe
Not of our eldres/ for our olde richeſſe
For though they yeue vs al her heritage
For whiche we clayme to ben of hye parage
Yet may they not bequethe/ for no thyng
To none of vs/ her vertuous lyuing
That made hem gentilmen yealled be
And badde vs folowen hem in ſuche degre.
¶ Wel can the wyſe poete of Florence
That hight Dauute/ ſpeke in this ſentence
Lo in ſuche maner ryme is Dauntes tale
Ful ſelde vp ryſeth by his braunches ſmale

Proweſſe

Prowesse of many: for god of his goodnesse
wol that we clayme of him our gentilnesse
for of our eldres may we nothyng clayme
But temporal thing/ ỳ mē may hurte & mayme
Eke euery wight wote this as wel as I
If gentilnesse were planted naturally
Vnto a certayne lynage do we the lyne
Pryue & apert/than wolde they neuer fyne
To done of gentilnesse the fayre office
They myght don no vilanye ne vice.
Take fyre & beare it in to the derkest hous
Bitwixe this and the mounte Caucasus
And let men shitte the doores/and go thenne
yet wol the fyre as fayre lye and brenne
As twenty thousande men myght it beholde
his office natural ay wol it holde
Vp peryll of my lyfe/tyll that it dye.
Here may ye se wel/ how we that gentrye
Is not annexed to possessions
Sythen men nolde don not her operations
Alway as dothe the fyre/so may we fynde
for god it wotte/ men may ful often fynde
A lordes sonne done shame and vilanye
And he that wol haue pryse of his gentrye
for he was borne of a gentil house
And had his eldres noble and vertuous
And nyll himself don no gentil dedes
Ne folowe his gentil auncetre that deed is
He nys not gentil / be he duke or erle
For vilanyes/synful dedes maketh a cherle
For gentilnesse nys but the renomme
Of thyn auncetres/ for her high bountie
Whiche is a straunge thyng to thy persone
The gentilnesse cometh fro god alone
Than cometh our very gentilnesse of grace
It was nothyng bequeth vs with our place.
Thynketh how we noble/as sayth Valerius
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius
That out of pouertie rose to hye noblesse
Redeth Senek/and redeth eke Boece
There shal ye seen expresse/no doute is
That he is gentil/ that dothe gentil dedes
And therfore dere husbondes I thus conclude
Al were it that myn auncetres were rude
Yet may that hye god/and so hope I
Graunt me grace to lyue vertuously
Than am I gentil/ whan I begynne
To lyue vertuously/and leuen synne.
And there as ye of pouertie me repreue
The hye god/on whom that we bileue
In wylfull pouerte chese to lede his lyfe
And certes euery man/maydē/ and wyfe
May vnderstonde/Jesu heuen kyng
Ne wolde not chese a vicious lyuyng.
Glad pouert is an honest thing certayne
This wol Senek and other clerkes sayne
Who so wolde holde him payde of his pouerte
I holde him ryche/al had he not a sherte
He that coueyteth is a ful poore wyght
for he wolde haue/that is not in his myght
But he ỳ naught hath/ne coueyteth to haue
Is ryche/al though ye holde him but a knaue
Very pouert is synne properly
Iuuenal sayth of pouert merily
The poore man/whan he gothe by the way
Byfore theues/he may synge and play
Pouert is hatefull good: and as I gesse
A ful great bringer out of busynesse
A great amender eke of sapience
To him that taketh it in pacience
Pouert is/al thoughe it seme chenge
Possession/that no wyght wol chalenge.
Pouerte ful often/whan a man is lowe
Maketh his god and eke him self to knowe.
Pouert a spectacle is/as thynketh me
Through whiche one may his very frendes se
And therfore/syn that I you not greue
Of my pouert/no more me repreue.
¶ Now sir/ eke of olde ye repreued me
And certes sir/though none auctorite
Were in no booke/ye gentils of honour
Sayne that men shuld an olde wight honour
And clepe hem father for her gentilnesse
And auctours shal I fynde/as I gesse.
¶ Now there as ye sayn/ ỳ I am foule & old
Than drede you not to ben a cokewold
for fylthe/elde/and foule/also mote I the
Ben great warderyns vpon chastite
But nathelesse/syn I know wel your delyte
I shal fulfyl your worldly appetyte
Chese now (quod she) one of these thinges tweye
To haue me foule and old/tyl that I deye
And be to you a trewe humble wyfe
And neuer you displease in al my lyfe

D:

Or elis wol ye haue me ponge and fayre
And take your auenture of the repayre
That shal come to your house/bycause of me
Or in some other place/ may wel be:
Now chese your selfen/ whether ỳ you lyketh
¶ This knight auyseth him/and soft sayth
But at the last/ he sayd in this manere:
Wy lady and my loue/and wyfe so dere
I put me in your wyse gouernaunce
Chesseth your selfe/whiche may be most plesaunce
And most honour to you & me also
I do no force whether of the two
For as you lyketh/it suffyseth me.
Thā haue I gote of you ỳ maistry (qd she)
Syn I may chese/and gouerne as my lefte
Ye certes wyfe (qd he) I holde it for the beste.
Kysse me (qd she) we be no lenger wrothe
For by my trouthe/I wol be to you bothe
This is to say/to be bothe fayre and good
I pray to god that I mote sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wyfe/syther ỳ world was newe
And but I be to morowe as fayre to sene
As any lady/empresse/or quene
That is bytwene the Est & eke the weste
Lothe with my lyfe right as you leste
Cast vp the courteyn/and loke how it is.
¶ And whan the knight sawe al this
That she so fayre was/and so ponge therto
For ioy he hente her in his armes two
His herte bathed in a bathe of blysse
A thousande tymes a rowe he gan her kysse
And she obeyed him in euery thyng
That mought done him plesure or lykyng
And thus they lyued vnto her lyues ende
In parfyte ioy: and Jesu Christ vs sende
Vs/vondes meke/ ponge/ and freshe a bedde
And grace to outlyue hem that we wedde.
And eke I pray to god/to shorte her lyues
That wyl not be gouerned by her wyues
And olde/and angry nygardes of dispence
God sende hem soue a verey pestilence.

¶ Here endeth the wyfe of Bathes tale/ and here beginneth the Freres prologue.

His worthy symylitude/this noble freere
¶ He made alway a maner louryng chere
Vpon the Sompnere/but for honeste
No villanye wolde as yet to him speke
But at the last/ he sayd to the wyfe
Dame/ god yeue you right good lyfe
Ye haue touched here/also moot I the
In schole matter/a ful great difficulte
Ye haue said moche thyng right wel I saye
But dame/here as we ryden by the waye
Vs nedeth not to spellen but of game
And leue auctorites a goddes name
To prechyng/and to schole of clergy.
But if it lyke vnto this compayne
I wol you of a Sompnere tel a game
Parde ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a Sompnere may no good be sayde
I pray/ that none of you be yuel apayde
A sompnere is a renner vp and doun
With mandementes/for fornicacioun
And is ybeate at euery townes ende.
Tho spake our host & said: sir ye/shulde hen
And curteys/as a man of your estate {kende
In this compayne we wol no debate
Telleth your tale/and let the Sompnere be
Nay (qd the Sompnere) let him say to me
What so him lyst: whan it cometh to my lote
By god I shal him quite euery grote
I shal him tell whiche a great honour
It is/to be a flateryng lymytour
And eke of many an other maner cryme
Whiche needeth not to reherse at this tyme
And his offyce I shal him tel wyde
Our host answerde/peace/no more of this
And after warde he sayd vnto the frere
Tel forthe your tale/myn owne maister dere.

¶ Here endeth the Freres prologue/and here after tel-leth his tale.

Hyllom there was dwellyng in my cõtre
A thy archedeken/a man of hye degre
That boldly dyd exercision
In punishyng of fornycation
Of witchecraft/and eke of bawdrie
Of defamacion/and aduoutrie
Of chirche reues/and of testamentes
Of contractes/and lacke of sacramentes
Of vsure/and of symonye also
But certes lechours dyd he moche wo
They shulden synge/if they were hente
And smale tythers they were foule shente
If any person wolde vpon hem playne
There myght auayle hem no pecunyal payne
For smale tythes / and smale offrynge
He made the people pitously to synge
For er the bysshop caught hem with his hoke
They were in the archedeknes booke
And than had he(thorough his iurisdiccion)
Power to done on hem correccion
He had a Sompnour redy to his honde
A slyer boye was there none in Englonde
For subtilly he had his espiayle
That taught him where he myght auayle.
He coude spare of lechours one or two
To techen him to forne and synke mo
For though this Sompnour wode were as an hare
To telle his harlotrye I wol not spare
For we ben out of his correccion
They haue of vs no iurisdiccion
Ne neuer shulle/terme of al her lyues.
Peter so ben wemen of the stewes.
(Qd this Sompnour) ypat out of our cure.
Pees with mischaunce/& with misauenture
Hard out hoste/and let him telle his tale
Now tellest thou frere/& let the Sompnour gale
Ne spareth not/myn owne maister dere.
Than sayd this/this Sompnour(qd the frere)
Had alway bawdes redy to his honde
As any hauke to fuyst in Englonde
That telleth him al the ferre that they knewe
For yet aqueintaunce was not rome of newe
They weren his approuers priuely
He took him selfe a great profyte therby
His maister knewe not alwaye what he wan
Without maundement/a lewde man
He coude somon/on payne of chastes curse
And they were glad to fyllen his purse
And made him great festes at the nale
And right as Iudas had purses smale
And was a theef: right swiche a theef was he
His maister had but halfe his dewte
He was(if I shal pleyn him thonde)
A theef/a sompnour/and eke a bawde.
He had eke wenches of his retinue
That whether sir Robyn/or sir Hue
Or Iohan/or Rafe/or who so that it were
That lay by him/they told it my his ere
Thus were the wenches and he of one assent
And he wolde fetche a false maundement
And somon hem to the chapitre bothe two
And pyke the man/and let the wenche go
Than wolde he say/frende I shal for thy sake
Do stryken the out of our lettres blake
Thou hast no mote as in this case I trowe
I am thy frende/there I may the auowe
Lette paye he knewe of bribours mo
Than possible is to tell in yeres two
For myn this wonder nyce dogge for the bowe
That can an hurte deer from an hole knowe
Ful wel the Sompnour knewe a sly lechour
Of wemen/or ellis any paramour
For that was the fruite of al his rente
Than

Therfore on it he sette all his entent.
And so befyll that ones on a day
This sompner waytynge euer on his pray
Rode for to somon an olde wedowe a rubyte
Fayning a cause/ for he wolde haue a bybe
And happed that he sawe before hym ryde
A gay yoman vnder a forest syde
A bowe he bare/ and arowes bright & shene
He had vpon hym a courtpye of grene
An hatte vpon his heed with fryuges blake
Sir qd this sompner/ hayle and well ptake
Welcome qd he/ and euery good fela we
Whyder rydest pu vnder this grene wode shawe
Said this yoman/ wolte thou ferre to day?
This sompner him answerd/ and said: nay
Here fast by (qd he) is myn entent
To ryden/ for to reysen vp a rent
That longeth to my lordes dewte.
Arte thou than a baylyf? ye (qd he)
He durst nat than/ for very fylth and shame
Say that he was a sompner/ for the name
Departdieux/ qd this yoman/ lefe brother
Thou arte a baylyf/ and I am another
I am vnknowen/ as in this countre
Of thyn acqueyntaunce I wolle pray the
And eke of brotherhed/ if that thou list
I haue golde and syluer in my chist
Yf that ye happe to come in our shire
All shall be thyn/ right as thou wolt desyre
Grantmercy qp this sompner/ by my faithe
Eurych in other his trouthe laythe
For to be swome brethern/ tyll they dey
And with that worde they ryden forth her wey
This sopner with ỹ was as full of ialgles
As full of venym/ as bey these wariangles
And euer enquyryng vpon euery thyng
Brother qd he/ where is your dwellyng
Another day/ if that I shalde you seche?
This yoman him answerde in soft spesche
Brother qd he/ ferre in the North countre
Where as I hope sometyme I shall the se
Or we departe/ I shall the so well wysse
That of myn house thou shalte neuer mysse.
Now brother qd this sompner/ I you pray
Teche me/ while we ryden by the way
Sith that ye bey a baylye/ as am I
Some subtelte/ tell me faithfully
In myn office/ how I may most wynne
And spareth nat for conscience ne for synne
But as my brother/ tell me how doy ye
Now we by my trouth brother dere/ said he
As I shall tellen the a faithfull tale
Myn wages bey full streite and smale
My lorde is harde to me and daungerous
And myne office full laborous
And therfore/ by extorcion I lyue
Forsothe all that myn wyll me yeue
Algate by slyght or by violence
Fro my yere to yere/ I wyn all my dispence
I can no better telley faithfully
Now we certes qd this sompnour/ so fare I
I spare nat to take god it wote
But if it be to heuy or to hote
That I may getten in conuayle priuely
No maner conscience of that haue I
Nere myn extorcion/ I myght nat lyuen
Of suche iapes wyll I nat be shriuen
Stomake ne conscience knowe I non
I shrewe all these shrift fathers euerychon
Well be we met by god and swete seynt Jame
But lefe brother/ tell me thy name
Quod this sompner/ in this mean while
This yoman gan a lytell for to smyle
Brother qd he/ wolte thou that I the tell?
I am a fende/ my dwellyng is in hell
And here I ride about my purchasyng
To wete where I may gete any thyng
My purchase is thestate of all my rent
Lo/ lo how thou rydest for the same entent
To wyn good/ thou rekkest neuer how
Right so fare I/ for rode wyll I now
Vnto the worldes ende for a pray
Ah/ qp this sompner/ benedicite/ what say ye
I wende ye were a yoman trewly
Ye haue a manns shappe as well as I
Haue ye a fygure than determynate
In hell/ there ye bey in your estate?
Nay certainly qd he/ there haue we non
But whan vs lyketh/ we can take vs one
Or elles make you semе we bey shape
Somtyme lyke a man or lyke an ape
Or lyke an Angell can I ryde or go
It is no wonder thyng thought it be so
A lousy iuggler can deceyue the

And

And parde yet can I mete crafte than he
Why q the Sompnour/ryde pe than or goy
In sondre shappe/and nat alway in one?
For we q he/woll be stuffe some maste
Is most able as our prayes for to taste
What maketh you to have all this labour?
C Full many a cause lefe sir Sompnour
Had this fende/but all thyng hath tyme
The day is short/and it is passed pryme
And yet ne gote I nothyng in this day
I woll entende to wynnyng/if that I may
And nat entende our wyttes to declare
For brother myne/thy wyttes ben all to bare
To understande al/though I wolde tel hem the
But for thou askest why labouren we
For somtyme be we goddes instrumentes
And meanes to don his comaundementes
What that him lust on his creatures
In dyuers arte and in dyuers figures
Withouten him we have no myght certayn
If that him lyst to stonden therr agayn
And somtyme at our praye have we leue
Only the body/& nought the soule to greue
Witnesse of Job/whom we deden wo
And somtyme have we myght of bothe two
This is to sayn/of body and soule eke
And somtyme we ben suffred for to seke
Upon a man/and don his soule unrest
And nat his body/and all is for the best
Whan he withstandeth our temptation
It is a cause of his saluation
All be it that it was nat our entent
He shulde be safe/but that we wolde him hent
And somtyme be we servauntes unto man
As the archebisshoppe saynt Dunstan
And to the apostell eke servaunt was I
pet tell me q this sompnour faithfully
Make pe you newe bodies thus alway
Of elementes: the fende answered nay
Somtyme we fayn/and somtyme we arise
With dede bodies in sondry wise
And speke as reasonably/faire and well
As the Pithonesse dyd to Samuel
And pet wolde some men say it was nat he
I do no force of youre dreryte
But o thyng I warne the/I woll nat lape
Thou wolte al gates wite how we be shape
Thou shalt herafterwarde (my brother dere)
Come/where the nedeth nat of me to lere
For thou shalt by thyne owne experience
Conne in the chaire rede of this sentence
Bette than Virgyll/while he was on lyue
Or Dant also. Now lette be rede blyue
For I woll holde company with the
Tyll it be so that thou forsake me
Nay q this sompnour/pe shall nat betide
I am a yoman knowen full wyde
My trouth woll I holde to pe/as in this caas
For though thou were the deuyll Sathanas
My trouth woll I holde to my brother
As I am sworne/and eche of pe to other
For to be trewe brother in this caas
And brother/we gon to our purchaas
Take thou thy parte/that mete woll the pleue
And I shall myne/and thus shall we both leue
And if that any of pe haue more than other
Let him be trewe/& parte it with his brother
I graunt qd the deuyll/by my fay
And with that worde they riden forth her way
And right at thentryng of the towues ende
(To which the sopnour shope him for to wende)
They saw a carte/that charged was with hay
Whiche that a carter droue forth on his way
Depe was the way/for whiche the carte stode
This carter smote/& stirred as he were wode
Hent stot hent brok/what spare pe for pe stones
The fende q he/you fetch both body & bones
As ferforth as ever pe were pformed
So moche wo as I haue for you tholed
The deuyll haue all/both horse/carte/& hay
O pis sopnour/here shal we haue a pray
And nere pe fende he drew/as nought ne were
Full prively/and rowned in his ere
Herken brother herken/by thy faith
Hearst thou what the carter saith?
Hent it anon/for he hath pleue it the
Both hay and carte/and eke his capples thre
Nay qd the deuyll/god wotte never a dele
It is nat his entent trust me wele
Axe him thy selfe/if thou trowest nat me
Or elles stynt a while and thou shalte se
This carter thakked his horse on the croupe
And they begon to drawe and to stoupe
Hent newe qd he/that Jesu crist you blesse

And

And al his hondy werke bothe more and lesse
That was wel yt wyght myn owyn lyttle boy
I pray god saue the and saynt Loye
Nowe is my carte out of the slowe parde.
Lo brother qd the fende/ what tolde I the
Here may ye seen myn owne dere brother
The carle spake o thige but he thought another
Lette vs go forthe about our viage
Here wyn we nothyng vpon carnage
Whan ȳ they comen to what out of ȳ town
This Sompner to his brother gan to rowne
Brother qd he/here wonneth an olde reuerse
That had almost as lefe to lese her nerse
As for to yeue a peny of her good
I wol hane. yii. d. tho that she were wood
Or I woll sompne her to our office
And yet god wotte of her knowe I no vice
But for thou canst nat/as in this countre
Wynne thy cost/take here ensample of me.
This Sompner clappeth at ȳ wedowes gate
Come out he said/thou olde verrate
I trowe thou hast some frere or preest w' the
Who clappeth ther said this wife/ benedicite
God saue you sir/what is your swete wyll
I haue qd he/ of somons of the here a byll
Vp payne of cursyng lobe that thou be
To morowe before our Archedeacons kne
To answere to the court of certayn thynges
Nowe lorde qd she/Jesu kyng of kynges
So wisely helpe me/as I ne may
I haue ben sicke/ and that full many a day
I may nat go so ferre/qd she/ne ryde
But I be dede/ so prickyth it in my syde
May I nat aske a sybell sir Sompnour
And answere there by my procteur
To suche thyng as men wolde appose me?
yes qd this Sompnour/ paye anon let se
Twelfe pens to me/and I wyll the acquyte
I shall no profite haue therof but lyte
My maister hath the profite/and nat I
Come of and lette me ryden hastely
Gyue me. yii. d. I may no lenger tary
Twelfpens qd she/lady saynt Mary
So wisely helpe me out of care and synne
This wyde worlde though I shulde it wynne
Ne haue I nat. yii. d. within my holde
Ye knowe well/that I am poore and olde
Kythe your almesse on me poore wrecche
Nay than qd he/ the foule fende me fetche
yf I the excuse/though thou shuldest be spylt
Alas qd she/god wotte yet haue I no gylt
Payeme qd he/or by swete saynt Anne
I wyll here away thy newe panne
For dette/ whiche thou owest me of olde
Whan thou madest thyne husbonde cokolde
I payde at home for thy correccion
Thou spekest qd she/ by my saluacion
Ne was I neuer er nowe/wydowe ne wyfe
Somned vnto your court in all my lyfe
Ne neuer I nas but of my body trewe
Vnto the deuyll blacke and rough of hewe
Yeue I thy body and my panne also.
And whan the deuyll herde her curse so
Vpon her knees/she said in this manere
Nowe Mabely/myn owne mother dere
Is this your wyll in ernest that ye sey?
The deuyll qd she/fette him er he dey
And pan and all/but he wyll him repent.
Nay olde stotte/that is nat myn entent
Qd this Sompnour/ for to repent me
For any thyng that I haue had of the
I wolde I had thy smocke and eurry clothe.
Nowe brother qd the deuyll/ be nat wrothe
Thy body and this pan is myne by right
Thou shalte with me to hell yet to nyght
Where thou shalte knowen of our preuyte
More than a maister of deuynite
And with ȳ worde the foule fende him hent
Body and soule/he with the deuyll went
Where that Sompnours haue their heritage
And god that made after his ymage
Mankynde/ saue and gyde vs all and some
And leue the sompnour good man to become
Lordinges I coud haue told you/ qd this frere
Had I had leyser/ of this Sompnour here
After the tryt of Dyuis/Poule/and Johan
And of other doctours many one
Suche peynes/ as pour herres myght agrise
Albeit so/that no tonge may it deuyse
Though ȳ I myght a thousande wynter tell
The peynes of that cursed house of hell
But for to kepe vs fro that cursed place
Wake/ and prayeth Jesu of his grace
So kepe vs from the temptour Sathanas

Herdeth

Herkenyth this worde/beware as I this cauns
The whych spirith in his awayte alwey
To slee the innocent/if that he may
Dispoyseth aye your hertes to wrathfoulde
The fende/if you wolde make thal a bonde
He may not tempte you ouer your myght
For Chryst wol be your champion & knyght
And prayeth/that this Sompner hym repite
Of his mysdede/er that the fende hym smite.

¶ Here endeth the Frerres tale/& begynneth the Sompners prologue.

THis Sompner in his styropes stode
Upon this frere/his herte was so wode
That lyke an aspen lefe he quoke for yre
Lordynges/(qꝺ he)but one thyng I desyre
I you beseche/that of your curtesy
Syth ye han herde this false frere lye
As suffreth me I may my tale tell
This frere bosteth that he knoweth hell
And god wote that as lyttel wonder
Frerres and fendes ben but lyttel asonder
For parde/ye han ofte tymes herde tell
Howe that a frere ravyshed was to hell
In spyrit onys by a vysyon
And as an angel ledde hym up and doun
To shewe hym the peynes that there were
In al the place sawe he not a frere
Of other folke he sawe ynowe in wo
Unto the angel spake the frere tho
Howe sir qꝺ he/han freres suche a grace
That none of hem shal come in this place?
Yes qꝺ this angel/many a myllyoun
And unto Sathanas lodde he hym adoun
And nowe hath Sathanas suche a tayle
Brodder than of a Carryke is the sayle
Holde up thy tayle thou Sathanas(qꝺ he)
Shewe forthe thyn ers/let the frere se
Where is the nest of freres in this place
And er that halfe a forlonge way of space
(Ryght as bees swarmen out of an hyve)
Out of the dyvels ers they gan dryve
Twenty thousande freres on a route
And thorughout hell swarmed al aboute
And comen ayen/as faste as they myght goo
And in his ers they crepten everychoon
He clapte his tayle ayen/and lay ful stylle.
¶ This frere/whan he loked hath his fylle
Upon the tormentes of this sorye place
His spyrite god restored of his grace
Unto his body ayen/and he awoke
But natheles/yet for fere he quoke
So was the dyvels ers ay in his mynde
That is his herytage of verry ryght
God save you al/save this cursed frere
My prologue wol I ende in this manere.

¶ Here endeth the Sompners prologue/and folowyth his tale.

Ordynges ther is in yorkshyre/as I gesse
A marshy countrey called Holdernesse
In whiche there went a limytour aboute
To preach/ and eke to begge/ it is no doute
And so byfell that on a day this frere
Had preched in a church in his manere
And specially aboue euery thyng
Exhited he the people in his prechyng
To trentals/ and to yeuen for goddes sake
Wher with men mighten holy houses make
There as diuyne seruyce is honoured
Not there as it is wasted and deuoured
Ne there it nedeth not for to be yeuen
As to possessioners that mowen eke lyuen
Thonked be god/ in wele and habundaunce
Trentals delyuereth (sayde he) fro penaunce
Her frendes soules/as wel olde as ponge
Yf that they be hastely isonge
Not for to holde a preest idly and gay
(He syngeth not but one messe a day)
Delyuereth out (qõ he) anon the soules
Ful harde it is with flesshe hoke or wt oules
To ben yplawed/or to brenne or bake
Now spedeth you hastely for Chrystes sake.
And whan this frere had said al his entent
With qui cum patre/forthe his way he went
Whe folke i church/had yeue hi what hem lest
He wente his way/no lenger wolde he rest
With scryppe a tytped staffe/ytucked hye
In euery house he gan to pore and prye
And begged mele and chese/or ells corne
His felowe had a staffe typped with horne
A payre of tables al of Ivory
And a poyntel polisshed fetously
And wrote alway the names as he stoode
Of al folke/ that yaue hem any goode
Askaunce as he welde for hem prey
Yeue vs a bushel wheate/malte/or rey
A goddes lychel/or a tryppe of chese
Or ells what ye lyst/ I may not chese
A goddes halfpeny / or a masse peny
Or yeue vs of your brawne/if ye haue any
A dagon of your blanket/ leue dame
Our sustter dere/ lo here I write your name
Bacon or bese/or suche thing as ye fynde
A sturdy harlot went hem ay behynde
That was her hostes man/ and bare a sacke
And that mã pane hem/ sayde it on his backe
And whan he was out at the dore anone
He planed away the names euerychone
That he byfore had written in his tables
He serued hem with nyfles and with fables.
¶ Nay there thou lyest Sõpner (qõ the frere)
Peace (qõ our host) for Chrystes mother dere
Tell forthe thy tale/and spare it not at all
So thryue I qõ the Sompner/so I shall.
¶ So longe he went fro hous to house tyl he
Came to an house/ther as he was wont to be
Refressshed more than in an hundred places
Sicke lay the good man/whose the place is
Bedred vpon a couche lowe he lay
Deus hic (qõ he) O Thomas frende good day
Sayd this frere/ curtesly and softe
Thomas god yelde it you/ful ofte
Haue I vpon this benche faren ful wele
Here haue I eaten many a mery mele
And fro the benche he droue away the catte
And layde adowne his potent and his hatte
And eke his scryppe/a set him softe adowne
His felowe was go walked in to the towne
Forthe with his knaue/in to that hostelrye
Where as he shope him that ilke night to lye.
¶ O dere maister/quod this sycke man
How haue ye faren sythen Marche began
I saw you not this fourtenight and more.
¶ God wot (qõ he) laboured haue I ful sore
And specially for thy saluacion
Haue I sayd many a precious orison
And for our other frendes/god hem blesse
I haue this day ben at your churche at messe
And sayd a sermon/ after my symple wytte
Not al after the text of holy writte
For it is harde to you/as I suppose
And therfore I wol teche you al the glose
Glosyng is a glorious thyng certayne
For letter sleeth/ as we clerkes sayne
There haue I hem taught to ben charitable
And spende her good there as it is resonable
And there I saw our dame/ a where is she?
¶ yonder in the perde/I trowe she be
Sayd this man/and she wol come anon.
¶ Ey mayster welcom ye be by sayntt Johan
Sayd this wyfe/how fare ye hertely?
¶ This frere aryseth vp ful curtesly

And

And her embraseth in his armes narowe
And kyssith her swetely/ & cherisheth as a spa-
Dame (qd he) right wele (ro we
As he that is youre seruaunt euery dele
Thanked be god/ that you sende so fyne
For saue I not this day so shyne a wyfe
In al the chirche/so god saue me
Ye god amende al faultes sir (qd she)
Algates welcome ye be/ by my fay.
Graunt mercy dame/ of that haue I fonde alway
But of youre grete goodnesse/by youre lene
I wol pray you/that ye not you greue
I wol with Thomas speke a lytel throwe
These curates ben ful negligent & slowe
To groping tenderly a mannes conscience
In shrift/ & in preching is my diligence
And to studye on Peters wordes & Poules
I walke to fysshe chosten mennes soules
To yelde Jesu Christ his propre rent
To spiede his wordes/as al myn entent.
Now by youre lene dere maister (qd she)
Lyketh him wel for seynt charyte
He is ape angry as a pysse myre
Though that he haue al that he can desyre
Though I him wrye my nyght/ & make hi warm
And ouer him lay my legge or myn arme
He groneth lyke our bore that lyeth in the stye
Other dispoute of him right none haue I
I may not please him in no maner caas.
O Thomas/ re bous dee/ Thomas Thomas
This maketh the fende/ this must ben amended
Ire is a thyng that god hyghly defended
And therof wol I speke a worde or two.
Now maister (qd the wyfe) er that I go
What wol ye dyne ; I wol go ther about.
Now dame (qd he) re bous dee fauz doute
Haue I not of a capon but the lyuer
And of youre whyte breed/ but a shyuer
And after that a rosted pygges heed
(But I nolde not for me no beest were deed)
Than hab I ynowe for my sustynaunce
I am a man of lytel sustynaunce
My spyrite hath his foostryng in the Bybille
My body is ape for rudy and for pampyllle
To wake/ that my body is best repreued
I pray you dame/ he ye nought agreued
Though I so sturdily you my conscience fecche
By god/ I nolde fayne take it but a fenne.
Now sir (qd she) but one worde er ye go
My childe is dede/ within these weekes two
Done after that ye wente out of this toun
Hys dethe sawe I by reuelacioun
Depe this freere/ at home in our dortoure
I haue wel sayne/ er that halfe an houre
After his dethe/ I sawe him borne to blysse
In myn auysyon/ god me so wysse
So dyd our sexteyn/ and our fermerere
That han ben trewe freeres this fyfty yere
They may now/ god be thanked of his lone
Haken her lubely/ and walken alone
And vp I arose/ and al our conuente eke
With many a teere tryllyng on our cheke
Without noyse or clateryng of belles
Te deum was our songe/ and nothing elles
Saue that to Christ I sayde an orison
Thanking him of my reuelacion
For sir and dame/ trusteth me right wel
Our orisons ben more effectuel
And more we seen of Christes secret thynges
Than boren folke/ although they were kynges
We sprue in pouerte/ and in abstinence
And boren folke in rychesse and dispence
Of meate & drinke/ and in her foule delyte
We han thus worldly ioye al in dispyte
Lazar and Diues/ lyued diuersely
And diuers guerdons had they therby
Who so wol pray/ he muste faste & be clene
And fatte his soule/ & make his body lene
We fare as sayth the apostel/ clothe and foode
Suffyseth vs/ though they be not ful goode
The clennesse & the fastyng of vs freres
Maketh that Christ accepteth our prayeres.
Lo thoyses/ fourty dayes & fourty nyght
Fasted/ er that the hye god of his myght
Spake with him in the mounte of Synay
With empty wombe/ fastyng many a day
Receyued he the lawe/ that was written
With goddes fynger/ and Helye wel ye witten
In mount Oreb/ er he had any speche
With the hyghe god/ that is our soules leche
He fasted longe/ and was in contemplacioun.
Aaron/ that had the temple in gouernaunce
And eke the other preestes euerychone
Into the temple whan they shulde gone

Lul. To

To prayen for the people/and done seruyce
They nolde dawe in no maner wyse
No dirige/ that dirige might hem make
But there in abstynence pray and wake
Lest that they deyden/take hede what I say
But they be sobre that for the people pray
Ware that I say/ no more for it suffyseth
Our lorde Jesu/as holy writte deuyseth
yaue vs ensample of fastyng and prayeres
Therfore we mendicantes/ we sely freres
Ben wedded to pouert and continence
To charite/humblenesse/and abstinence
To persecution for rightwysnesse
To wepping/mysericorde/and clennesse
And therfore may ye se that our prayeres
(I spek of vs mendicant/ we freres)
Ben to the hye god more acceptable
Than yours/ with your fest at your table.
¶ Fro Paradyse first/if I shal not lye
Was man out chased for his glotonye
And chaste was man in paradyse certayne
But herken now Thomas what I shal sayn
I haue no text therof/as I suppose
But I fynde it in maner of a glose
That specially our swete lorde Jesus
Spake this by freres/whan he sayd thus
Blessed be they that poore in spyrite ben
And so forthe al the gospel may ye seen
Whether it be lyker our perfection
Or hers that swymmen in possessyon
Fye on her pompe/ and on her glotonye
And in her lewednesse/I hem deffye
We thynketh they ben lyke Jouinyan
Fatte as a whale/ and walkyng as a swan
As lycherous as bolt in the spence
Her prayere is of ful hyghe reuerence
Whā they for soules say ye psalme of Dauid
As bestis they seyn (Cor meum eructauit)
Who folweth Christes gospel and his lore
But we/ that humble be/chaste/and poore
Werkers of goddes worde/& not auditours
Therfore ryght as an hauke at a sours
Vp stoureth in to the eyr/so prayeres
Of charitable and chaste busy freres
Maken her sours to godde renne and go
Thomas Thomas/so mote I ryde or go
And by that lorde that clepid is seynt Yue

Ne yᵉ our broder were/ yᵉ shuldest not thinne
For in our chapitre pray we day and nyght
To Crist/that he the sende helth & myght
Thy body for to welden hastely.
¶ God wotte qᵒ he/nothyng therof felt I
As helpe me Crist/ as in fewe yeres
Haue I spended vpon dyuers manere freres
Wel many a pounde/yet fare I neuer the bette
Certayne my good haue I almoste besette
Farwel my good/for it is almoste ago.
The frere answerd/o Thomas dost thou so?
What nedeth the dyuers freres seche?
What nedeth hym that hath a parfyte leche
To seche other leches in the town?
Your inconstaunce is your confusion
Holde ye me thay/or els our conuent
To prayen for you insuffysaunt?
Thomas/that sayen nys not worthe a myte
Your malyce is for we haue to lyte
A/penye that conuent halfe a quarter otes
And penye that conuent foure & twenty groten
And penye that frere a penny/ and lat hym go
Nay nay Thomas/it may nothyng be so
What is a fardyng worth parted in twelue?
Lo/ eche thyng that is ouer his selue
Is more stronge/than whan it is ioyned therto
Thomas/ of me thou shalte not ben yflatered
Thou woldest haue al our labour for nought
The frye goo that al this world hath wrought
Bapise/ ye the workeman is worthy his hyre
Thomas/naught of your tresoure I desyre
As for my selfe/but that al our conuent
To pray for you is aye so dylygent
And for to bylden Cristes owne chyrche
Thomas/if ye wol lerne for to wyrche
Of buyldyng vp of chyrches may ye fynde
If it be goode in Thomas lyfe of Inde.
ye frydays ben ful of angre and of yre
With wikked ye wenen your herte on fyre
And chyden here this holy innocent
Your wyfe that is so meke and pacient
And therfore trowe me Thomas if you lyke
Ne chyde not with thy wyfe as for the beste
And bere this worde alway by thy fayth
Touching suche thyng to what ye wyfe sayth
Within thy house be thou no lyon
To thy subiectes do thou neuer oppression

Ne make not thyn aquayntaunce to fle
And yet Thomas/ofttymes charge I the
Beware of her that in thy bosome slepeth
Ware the of the serpent/ that so slyly crepeth
Vnder the grasse/and styngeth ful subtelly
Beware my sonne/and herken paciently
That twēty thousāde men han lost her lyues
For stryuyng with her lewmans & her wyues
Lowe ferus ye haue so holy and mēke a wyfe
What nedeth you Thomas to make stryfe:
There nys I wysse no serpent so cruell
(When men tredon on his taile) ne halfe so fel
As a woman is/ whā she hath caught an yre
Vengeaunce is than al her desyre.
¶ Ire is a synne/one of the greatest of seuen
Abhominable vnto the hygh god of heuen
And to him selfe it is a destruction
This euery lewde vicare and parson
Can say/for ire engendreth homycyde
Ire is in sothe the executour of pryde
I could of yre say so mache sore we
That my tale shulde laste tyl to morowe
And therfore I pray god bothe day & nyght
That to ony vyrous man he sende tyrst myght
It is great harme/and ryht great pyte
To set an vyrous man in hye degre.

Whylom there was an vyrous potestate
As saythe Senecle/that duryng his estate
Vpon a day out rydden knyghtes two
And as fortune wolde it shulde be so
That one of hem came home/ tyl other mynght
Anon the knyght before the inge is inowght
That sayd thus: thou hast thy felowe slayne
For which he I bene the to the deth certayne
And to another knyght commaunded he
Go lete him to the deathe I charge the
And forward as they went by the way
Lo where the place/there he shulde dey
The knyght came/which not wiste hab he dede
Them thought they it was the beste rede
To lete him bothe to the mydde ayayne
They sayden shulde the knyght hath not slayn
Him selfe we/there he shulde dede of pure.
ye shulden be bothe (qd he) I wene I shene
That is to say bothe anon tho/and thus
And to the first knyght myght thus spake he.
I dampned the/thou mvste algate be dede
And thou mvste also lese neden thyn hede
For thou arte cause why thy felawe deyth
And to the thirde knyght right thus he sayth
Thou haste not done that I cōmaunded the
And thus he dyd hem slen al thre.

Ireuse Cambyses was eke dronkelewe
And eke delyted him to ben a shrewe
And so byfell a lorde of his meyne
That loued well vertuous moralyte
Sayd on a day bytwyxt hem two right thus
A lorde is lost/if he be aught vycious
And dronkennesse eke is a foule record
Of any man/and namely of a lorde
There is many an eye and many an ere
Awaytyng on a lorde/he notte where
For goddes loue dronketh more temperatly
Wyne maketh a man to lese wretchedly
His mynde/ and his lymmes euerychone.
¶ The rewrs shalte thou se(qd he)anone
And preue it by thyn owne experience
That wyne ne dothe to folke no suche offence
There nys no wyne bireueth me my mvght
Of honde/of foote/ne of myn eye syght
And for dispyte he dronke mochell more
An hundred tymes than he dyd before
And right anon/this cursed vyrous wretche
Let this knyghtes sonne byfore him fetche
Commaūding him he shulde byfore him stōde
And sodainly he toke his bowe in honde
And vp the strynge he pulled to his ere
And with an arowe he slough the childe there
Now wher I haue I a syker honde or none
Qd he: is al my myght and mynde agone:
Hath wyne byreued me myn eyen syght:
¶ What shulde I tel the answere of the knyght
His sonne was slayne/there is no more to say
Deme ye therfore/with lordes how we ye play
Syngz Placebo/and I shal if I can
But if it be vnto a poore man
To a poore man/one shulde his vices tell
But not to a lorde/though he shuld go to hell.

Lo yonge Lyrus/ thesbe Perses
Holde dystroyed the tyrant of Cyses:
For that on hate of his wife dyryll thinge

I.iii. Whan

Whan he went Babylone to wynne
He made that the ryuer was so smalle
That men might ryde and waden ouer all.
¶ Lo/ what said he/that so wel techē can
Ne be no flowe to none prous man
Ne with no wode man walke by the way
Lest thou repent/I wol no farther say.
¶ Now Thomas leue brother/leaue thyn yre
Thou shalte me fynde as iuste/as is a squyre
Holde not the dyuels knyfe aye in thyn herte
Thyn angre dothe the al to sore smerte
But shewe to me al thy confessyon.
¶ Nay (qō the sycke man) by saynt Symon
I haue be shryue this day of my curate
I haue told him al myn estate
Nedeth no more to speke of it/ sayth he
But if me lyst/of myn humilite.
geue me thā of thy gold/to make our cloistre
Qō he/for many a mussle a many an oystre
Whan other men haue ben ful wel at ese
Hath ben our foode/our cloystre for to rese
And yet god wotte/vnneth the foundament
Parfourmed is/ne of our pauement
Is not a tyle yet within our wones
By god we owen fourty pounde for stones
Now helpe Thomas/for him ȳ haro wed hall
For els mote we our bokes selle
And if you lacke our predicatyon
Than gothe this worlde al to destruccyon
For who so wol fro this worlde vs byreue
So god me saue/Thomas by your leue
He wolde byreue out of this worlde the sonne
For who can techen & worchen/as we conne
And that is not of lytel tyme (qō he)
But sythe Helye was/ or Helyse
Han freres ben/that fynde I of recorde
In charite/ ythonked be our lorde
Now we Thomas/for sayntē charite
And do vne anon he spitteth on his fute.
¶ This sicke man woxe nye woode for yre
He wolde the frere had ben a fyre
With his false dissymulacyon
Suche thynges as ben in my possessyon
(Qō he) that may I yeue/and none other
Ye sayn me thus/how ȳ I am your brother.
Ye certes (qō this frere) trusteth me wele
I take our dame our sister and our dele.
¶ Nay (qō he) wel is somwhat shal I yow
Vnto your holy conuent/while I lyue
And in thyn honde/ thou shalt it haue anone
By this condycyon/and other none
That thou departe it so/ my leue brother
That euery frere/haue as moche as other
This shalte thou swere on thy profession
Without fraude or cauelacyon.
¶ I swere it (qō the frere) by my fayth
And therwithal his honde in his he layth
Lo here my fayth/in me shal be no lacke.
¶ Than put thyn honde down by my backe
Sayd this man/and grope wel behynde
Vnneth my buttocke/ there thou shalte fynde
A thyng/that I haue hydde in pryuyte
Ah/ thought the frere/that shal go with me
And down he thrist his honde to the clyfte
In hope to fynde there some good gyfte
And whan this sicke man felte this frere
Aboute his towel/groping here and there
Amyd his honde/he let the frere a farte
There nys no capell/drawyng in a carte
That might haue let a farte of suche a soun.
¶ The frere vp starte/as doth a wode lyon
A false chorle (qō the frere) for goddes bones
This haste thou in dispyte do/ for the nones
Thou shalte abye this farte/if I may
His meyny/that herde of this affray
Came leapyng in/and chased out the frere
And forthe he gothe/with a ful angry chere
And fette his felowe/there as lay his store
He lokede as he were a wylde boore
He gnyted his tethe/so was he wrothe
A sturdy pace/downe to the courte he gothe
Where as there wōned a man of great honour
To whom that he was alway confessour
This worthy man/ was lorde of that Village
This frere came/as he were in a rage
Where as this lorde sate eatyng at his boorde
Vnnethes might the frere speke a worde
Tyll at the laste he sayd/god you se.
¶ This lorde gan loke/and sayd benedicite
What frere Johā/ what manere world is this
I se wel that somthyng is a mys
Ye loke as thoughe ȳ wodde were ful of thefes
Syt downe/ & tel me what your grefe is
And it shal be amended/if that I may.

I frere

¶ I haue (qð he) had a disputc to day
God yelde it you/ adoune in youre village
That in this wolde/is none so poure a page
That he nolde haue abhominacioun
Of that I haue receyued in youre toun
And yet me greueth nothyng so sore
As that the olde churle/with sorowe haue
Blasphemed hath our holy conuent eke.
¶ Nowe maisters (qð this lorde) I you beseke
No maisters sir (qð he) but seruitours
Though I haue had my schole that honour
God forbeth not/that men vs Raby calle
Neyther in market/ne in youre large halle.
No force (qð he) but tel me of youre greefe.
¶ Sir (qð this frere) an odious mischefe
This day is befyd/to myne ordre/and to me
And so per consequens to eche degree
Of holy churche/god amende it sone.
Sir (qð the lorde) ye wote what is to done
Distempre you not/ ye ben my confessour
ye ben the salte of the erthe/and the sauour
For goddes loue your pacience nowe holde
Telleth me your grefe: & he anon hym tolde
As ye han herde byfore/ye wotte wel what
The lady of the house/ aye fylle satte
Tyl she had herde what the frere sayde.
Eye goddes mother (qð she) a blissful mayde
Is there nought els/tel me faythfully
Madame (qð he) howe thynketh ye therby
Howe that me thynketh: so god me spede
I say a churle hath done a chorles dede
What shulde I say/ god let hym neuer the
His sicke hed is full of vanyte
I holde hym in a maner of frenesye.
Madame (qð he) by god I shal not lye
But I in any wyse may ben on hym a wreke
I shal slaunder hym ouer al/where I speke
That false blasphemour/that charged me
To parte it/that might not departed be
To euery man alyke/with mischaunce.
The lorde sate styl/ as he were in a traunce
And in his herte he rolled vp and doun
Howe that this churle had ywrongen him
To shewe suche a pompelous to the frere
Euer erst or nowe me fayde I suche a matere
I trowe the deuyll put it in his mynde
Ire of Arsmetrike/there shal no man fynde
Byfore this day/ of suche a questyon
Who shulde make a demonstracion:
That euery man shulde haue dyde his parte
Of a sowne or sauour of a farte
O nyce proude churle/ I shrewe thy face.
Lo sirs (qð the lorde) with harde grace
Who euer herde of suche a thyng or nowe?
To euery man alyke/tell me howe
It is an impossible/it may not be
Eye nyce churle/god let him neuer the
The romblyng of a farte/and euery soun
Nyo but of eyre reuerberacioun
And euer it wasteth lytel and lytel away
There is no man can demen/by my fay
If that it were departed equally
What: so my churle: lo/ yet howe shrendsy
Vnto my confessour to day he spake
I holde him certayne a demoniake.
Nowe etcth your meate/& let ȳ churle go play
Let him go honger him selfe a dyuel way.
Nowe stode the lordes squyer at the borde
That carfe his meate/ & herd worde by worde
Of al thing/of whiche I haue you sayde
Mylorde (qð he) be not yuel apayde
I couthe tel for a gowne clothe
To you sir frere/so that ye ben not wrothe
Howe that this saute shulde euyn ydeled be
Amonges your conuent/ if it lyked the.
Tel on (qð ȳ lorde) & thou shalt haue anon
A gowne clothe/ by god & by saynte Johan
My lorde (qð he) whan ȳ the wedet is faire
Without wynde/or perturbyng of ayre
Let hang a carte wheele here in to this hall
But soth he haue his spokes all
Euelne spokes hath a carte wheele comunly
And hang me than .xii. freres/ wote ye why?
For thyrtene is a conuent as I gesse
Your confessour here/for his worthynesse
Shal personifie ȳ the nombre of his conuent
Thā shulden they studien ad̄oen by one assent
And to euery spokes ende/in this manere
Full sadly lay his nose shal a frere
Your noble confessour there/god him sauue
Shal holde the nose vpright vnder the naue
Than shal this churle/ w' hely fyrste & tought
As euy tabour/yfere hen ybrought
And set him on the wheele/right of thre cartes
Dyon

Upon the name/& made him lit a farte
And ye shulden se/by peryl of my lyfe
By preste/whiche is demonstratyfe
That equally the sowne of it wyl wende
And eke the fynke/vnto the spokes ende
Saue that this worthy man your cõfessour
(Because he is a man of great honour)
Shal haue the first frutes/as reson is
The noble vsage of freres yet is this.
The worthest mã of hem shal first be serued
And certaynly/he hath it wel deserued
He hath to day taught vs so moche good
With preching in the pulpet there he stood
That I may vouchesafe/I say for me
He had the first smell of sartes thre
And so wolde al his brethern hardely
He bereth him so fayre and holily.
¶ The lord/ỹ lady/& eche man/saue the frere
Sayd that Jankyn spake in this matere
As wel as Ouyde dyd or Ptholome
Touchyng the chirles sayde subtilte
And hye wytte made him spek as he spake
He nys no foole/ne no demonyake
And Jankyn hath ywonne a newe gowne
My tale is done/we ben almoste at towne.

¶ Here endeth the Sompners tale/and here foloweth the clerke of Oxẽfordes prologue.

Ir clerke of Oxforde/our hoste sayde
ye ryde as styl & coye/as dothe a mayde
Were newe spoused/sittyng at ỹ boorde
This day ne herde I of your mouth a worde
I trowe that ye studye aboute some sophyme
But Salomon sayth/al thyng hath tyme
For goddes sake/bethe of better chere
It is no tyme nowe to studye here
Tel vs some mery tale by your fay
For what man is entred in to a play
He nedes mote vnto that play assent
But precheth not/as freres done in lent
To make vs for our olde synnes to wepe
Ne that thy tale make vs not to slepe.
Tel vs some mery thyng of auentures
your termes/your fygures/& your colourres
kepe hem in store/tyl so be that ye endyte
Hyghe style/as whan men to kynges write
Speketh so playne at this tyme/I you pray
That we may vnderstonde what ye say.
¶ This worthy clerke benygnely answerde
Hoste(quod he)I am vnder your yerde
ye haue of vs as nowe the gouernaunce
And therfore wol I do you obeysaunce
As farre as reason asketh hardely
I wol you tell a tale/whiche that I
Lerned at Padowe/of a worthy clerke
As preued is by his wordes and his werke
He is nowe deed/and nayled in his chiste
I pray to god sende his soule good reste.
Fraunces Petrarke/the laureat poete
Hyghte this clerke/whose rhetorike swete
Enlumyned al Itayle of poetrye
As Lynyan dyd of philosophye
Or lawe/or other arte particulere
But deth ỹ wol not suffre vs dwellen here
But as it were the twynklyng of an eye
Hem bothe hath slayne/and al we shal dye.
¶ But for to tellen of this worthy man
That taught me this tale/as I first began
I say that he first with hye style endyteth
(Or he the body of his tale writeth)
A proheme/in whiche discriueth he
Piemount/and of Saluce the countre
And speketh of Apenuny the hylles hye
That ben the boundes of west Lumbardye
And of mount Vesulus in speciall
Where as the Poo/out of a wel smal
Taketh his first spryng and his soure
That estwarde euer increseth in his cours
To Emelle warde/to Ferrare/and to Venyse
The whiche a longe tyme were to deuyse
And truly/as to my iugement
Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent
Saue that hym lyste conuey his matere
But this is his tale as ye shullen here.

¶ Here endeth the prologue of the clerke of Oxforde/and here foloweth his tale.

Thes

THere is/ in the west syde of Italye
Down at the rote of Vesulus ỹ colde
A lusty playne/habundaunt of vitaylle
Where many a towr & toure thou maist behold
That sonded were/in tyme of fathers olde
And many a nother delectable sygh̄t
And Saluces/ this noble comune hyght

A Marses wysdom was in that londe
As were his worthy eldres hym byfore
And obeysaunt ape redy to his honde
Were al his leges/ bothe lesse and more
Thus in delyte he lyued/ and hath done yore
Beloued & drad/ through fauour of fortune
Bothe of his londes and of his comune

Therwith he was/ as to speke of lynage
The gentyleste yborne of al Lombardy
A lusty person/ & stronge/ and yong of age
And ful of honour and curtesye
Discrete ynowe/ his countre for to gye
Save in some thynges he was to blame
And Walter was this yonge lordes name

His fadre hym thus/ that he cōsyderd nought
In tyme comyng/ what hym myght betyde
But on his lust present was all his thought
And for to hawke and hunt on every syde
Wel ny all other cures lette he slyde
And eke he ne wolde/ that was worst of all
Wedde no wife/ for ought that myght befall

Duche that poynt his people bare so sore
That flokmele on a day to him they went
And one of hem/ that wysest was of lore
(Or elles that the lorde wolde best assent
That he shulde telle him what his people mēt
Or elles conde he shewe suche matere)
He to the Marques sayd/ as ye shullen here.

O noble Marques/ your humanyte
Assureth vs/ and preueth yo hardynesse
As ofte tyme as is neressyte
That we may to you telle our heuynesse
Accepteth lorde of your gentylnesse
That we to you with pitous hert playne
And lette your eares nat my voice disdayne

Al haue I nat to done in this matere
More than another hath in this place
Yet for as moche/ as ye my lorde so dere
Haue alway sherd me fauour and grace
I dare

I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience/to shewen our requeste
And yet my lorde to done right as you leste

For certes lorde:so wel hit sytteth you
And al your werk‖ yt euer haue don/that we
Ne coulde our owne selfe deuysen how we
We myght more spuen in felycite
Saue one thing lorde/if it your wyll be
That for to be a wedded man/ you lest
Thā were your people in soueraun hertes rest

Bowyth your nerke vnder the blyssful yoke
Of soueraynte/and not of seruyse
Whiche men clepen spousayle or wedlokke
And thinketh lorde/amōg your thoughtes wise
How that our dayes passen in sundrie wyse
For though we slepe or wake/ renne/ or ryde
Aye fleeth the tyme/it wol no man abyde

And though your grene youthe floure/as yet
In crepeth age alway as stylle as stone
And dethe manaseth euery age/and smyte
In eche estate/for there escapeth none
And also certayn/ as we knowen echone
That we shul dye/ yt vncertayne we all
Ben of that day/that dethe shall on vs fall

Accepteth than of vs the trewe entent
That neuer yet refused your heste
And we wol al lorde/if ye wol assent
Chese you a wyfe in shorte tyme/ at the lest
Borne of the gentilleste and of the meste
Of al this londe/so that it aughte seme
Honour to god yt you/as nere as we can deme

Delyuer vs out of al this busy drede
And take a wyfe/for hye goddes sake
For if it so befell/ as god forbede
That thorow we dethe/ your lynage shuld slake
And that a straunge successour shulde take
Your heritage/ O/ wo were vs on lyue
Wherfore we pray you hastely to wyue.

Her mekē prayere and her pytouse chere
Made the knyght for to haue pyte
Wol ye (quod he) myn owne people dere
To that I neuer erst thought/ constrayne me
I me inuyced of my libertie
That seldom tyme is founde in marriage
There I was free/ I mote ben in seruage

But natheles/I se your true entente
And truste vpon your wytte/ yt haue done aye
Wherfore of my fre wyl I woll assente
To wedden me/as sone as euer I may
But there/as ye haue profred me to day
To chese me a wyfe/I you relese
That choyce/and pray you of that profer ese

For god it wote/that chyldren ofte been
Vnlyke her worthy eldres/ hem before
Bounte cometh all of god/ yt nat of the streen
Of whiche they been engendred and ibore
I truste my goddes bounte/and therfore
My marriage / myn estate/ and rest
I hym betake/he may don as hym lest

Lette me alone in chesyng of my wife
That charge vpon my backe I woll endure
But I you pray/ and charge vpon your lyf
That what wife I take/ye me ensure
To worshyp her/whiles her lyfe may dure
In worde and werke/here/ and elswhere
As she an Emperours doughter were

And furthermore/ thus shall ye swere/ yt ye
Ayenst my choice shal neuer grutche ne stryue
For sithe I shall for go my libertie
At your requeste/ as euer mote I thryue
There as myn hert is set / there woll I wyue
And but ye woll assent/ in suche manere
I pray you speketh no more in this matere

With hertly wyll they sworen and assent
To al this thyng/ there said no wight nay
Desyrynge hym of grace er they went
That he wolde hem graunt a certayn day
Of his spousaile/ as soone as euer he may
For yet alway the people somwhat dredde
Lest this Marquys wolde no wife wedde

He graunted hem a day/suche as hym lest
On whiche he wolde be wedded sikerly

And

And said he dyd al this at her requeste
And they with humble entent ful buyously
Knelyng vpon her knees ful reuerently
Hym thonked al/and thus they han an ende
Of her entent/and home ayen they wende

And herre vpon he tolde his officers
Cõmaundyng for the ferst to purueye
And to his yong knyghtes and squiers
Suche charge gaue/as he lyst on hem lay
And they to his cõmaundement obey
And eche of hem dothe his diligence
To done to the ferst reuerence.

Explicit pars prima/et
sequitur secunda.

Nought ferre fro thilke place honorable
Where as this Markes shope his mariage
There stode a thorpe/of syght ful delectable
In which poure folke of that village
Hadden her liuelode and herbygage
And of her labour tolde her sustenaunce
After that the erthe gaue hem habundaunce

Amonge this poure folke/there dwelled a man
Which that was holden poorest of hem all
But yet god sometyme sende can
His grace vnto a lytel oxe stall
Janicola/men of that thorpe him call
A doughter had he/fayre ynough to syght
And Grisylde this yonge mayden hyght

But for to speke of vertuous beaute
Thay was she one the fayrest vnder sonne
And ful poorely yfostred vp was she
No lykerousnesse ful often in her herte ronne
Well ofter of the well than of the tonne
She dranke/and for she wolde vertue plese
She knew wel labour/but non idelnesse

And though this mayde bore ful poore of age
Yet in the bust of her nyghtgale
There was enclosed/soble and ryche corage
And in great reuerence and charyte
Her olde poure father fostred she
A few sheep spynnyng on the felde she kept
She wolde not ben ydell tyl she slept

And whã she homwarde came/she wold bring
Wortes and herbes/ofte times ful ofte
Which she shradde & sethe for her lyuyng
And made her bedde ful harde/& nothing softe
And ay she kepte her fathers lyfe on loft
With euery obeysaunce and diligence
That chylde myght do to the fathers reuerence.

Vpon Grisylde the poore creature
Ful ofte hath the Markes sette his eye
As he ay huntyng rode parauenture
And when it fel/that he myght her aspye
He (not with wanton lokyng of folye)
His eyen caste vpon her/but in sadde wyse
Vpon her chere/he wolde him ofte auyse

Cõmending in his herte her womanhede
And eke her vertue/passyng euery wyght
Of so yonge age/as wel in chere as in dede
For though the people haue no great insyght
In vertue: he consydred full right
Her bounte/and disposed that he wolde
Her wedde/if he euer wedde shulde.

The day of weddyng cam/but no wight can
Tel/what woman it shulde be
For whiche maruaile/wondred many a man
And sayden/whan they were in her presence
Wol not our lorde yet leaue his vanyte
Wol he not wedde/alas alas the whyle
Why wol he thus him self and vs begyle

But nathelesse this Markes hath do make
Of gemmes/set in golde and in asure
Brooches and ringes/for Grisyldes sake
And of her clothyng/toke he the mesure
Of a mayden lyke to her stature
And eke of other ornamentes all
That to suche a weddyng shulde fall

The tyme of vndren/in the same day
Approched/that the weddyng shulde be
And al the palays put was in aray
Both halle and chambres/eche in his degre
Houses of offyce stuffed with great plente
There mayst thou se of dayntyous viandes
That may be founden/as far as lasteth Inde

The

This royal Markes/richely arayde
Lordes and ladyes in his compayne
The whiche that to the feest were prayde
And of his retinue the bachelery
With many a soune of sondue melodye
Unto the village/ of which I tolde
In this aray/the right way hath holde.

¶ Grisylde (god wotte of this ful innocent
That for her was shape al this array)
To fetche water at a wel went
And cometh home as sone as euer she may
For wel she herde say/that ylke day
That the Markes shuld wedde/& if she might
She wolde fayne seen some of that syght

She thought: I wold wt other maydens stode
That ben my felowes in our dore and se
The Markes/and therto wol I fonde
To done at home/as sone as it may be
The labour/ whiche that longeth to me
And than may I at leyser it beholde
If she the way to the castell holde

And as she wolde ouer the diesshold goy
The Markes came/and gan her for to call
And she sette downe her water potte anoy
Besyde the threshold of the oxe stall
And doune vpon her knees she gan to fall
And with sadde countenaunce knceled styll
Til she had herde what was the lordes wyll.

This thoughtful Markes spake to ỳ mayde
Wel soberly/and said in this maniere
Where is youre father Grisylde/ he sayd:
And she with reuerence and mekc chere
Answerde/lorde he is al redy here
And in she gothe/without lenger lette
And to the Markes she her father fette

He by the honde than toke this olderman
And sayd thus/whan he had him aside
Janycola/ I neyther may ne can
Lenger the plesaunce of myn herte hyde
If that thou vouche safe/what so euer betyde
Thy doughter wol I take/or that I wende
As for my wyfe/to my lyues ende

Thou louest me/ I wotte wel certayne
And arte my faythful liege man yborne
And al that lyketh me/ I dare wel sayne
It lyketh the/and specially therfore
Tel me that poynte/that I haue said before
If that thou wolt to thys purpose drawe:
To take me for thy sonne in lawe

¶ This sodayne case/the man astoned so
That reed he weyst abasshed/& al quaking
He stode/ ne longeth sayd he wordes mo
But onely thus(quod he)lorde my wyllyng
Is as ye wol/ ne ayenst your lykyng
I wol nothing/ye be my lorde so dere
Right as you lyste/gouerne this matere

Than wol I thus(quod this Markes)softly
That in thy chambre/I/you/and she
Haue a collation/and wost thou why:
For I wol aske her/if her wyl be
To be my wyfe/and rule her after me
And al this shal she done in thy presence
I wol not speke out of thyn audyence

And in the chambre/while they were about
The tretes/whiche ye shal after here
The people came into the house without
And wondred hem/ in how honest manere
So tentifly she kept her father dere
But vtterly Grisylde wonder myght
For neuer erste sawe she suche a syght

No wonder is thoughe she be astoned
To se so great a gest come into that place
She was neuer to suche gestes woned
For whiche she lokcd with ful pale face
But shortly fro this mater for to pace
These weren the wordes ỳ the Markes sayde
To this benygne and verey faythful mayde

¶ Grisylde he said/ ye shal wel vnderstande
It lyketh vnto youre father and me
That I you wedde/and eke it may so stande
As I suppose/that ye wol that it so be
But these demaundes I aske first(quod he)
That sothely it shal be done in hastyfyse
Wol ye therto assent/or ellis you auyse

I sey

I say thus/be ye redy with good herte
To al my laste/and that I fully may
As me best lyketh/though ye laugh or smerte
And neuer ye to grutche/nyght ne day
What I say ye/that ye say not ones nay
Neyther I wrothe/ne by frowning countenaunce
Swere this/& here I swere our aliaunce

Wedding vpon these wordes/ quakyng for
She sayd:lorde/indigne & vnworthy (duede
Am I/to thylke honour that ye me bede
But right as ye wol/ so wol I
And here I swere/ that neuer wyllyngly
In word/werke/ne thought/I nyl you disobey
For to be deed/though me were loth to dey.

This is ynough Grisylde myn (qd he)
And forthe he gothe with a sobre chere
Out at the dore/and after came she
And to the people/he said in this manere
This is my wyfe(qd he)that stondeth here
Honourreth her/ & loueth her/I you pray
Who so me loueth/there nys no more to say

And for that no thyng of her olde gere
She shulde bring in to his house/he badde
That women shulde dispoyle her right there
Of whiche these ladyes were nothyng gladde
To handle her clothes/ in which she was clad
But natheleesse/this mayden bright of hewe
Fro foote to heed they clothed han al newe

Her heer han they kembed/ that laye vntressed
Ful rudely/and with her fyngres smale
A crowne on her heed they han idressed
And set it ful of ouches great and smale
Of her array/ what shulde I make a tale ?
Dunneth the people her lewed for her fayrnesse
Whan she transformed was in swich richesse

This Walter hath her spoused w[th] a ringe
Wrought for the same cause/& than her set
Vpon an horse snowe white/ wel amblynge
And to his palays/or he longer let
With ioyful people/that her ladde and met
Conueyed her/& thus the day they spende
In reuel/tyl the sonne gan discende

And shortly forthe this tale for to chase
I saye/ that to this newe Marquesse
God hath sent swiche fauour of his grace
That it semed not/as by her besynesse
That she was borne and fedde in rudenesse
As in a cote/or in an oxe stall
But nourished in an emperours hall

To euery wyght/she wexen is so dere
And worshipful/ that folke ther as she was bore
And fro her byrthe/ knewe her yere by yere
Vnneth trowed they/but durst haue swore
That to Janycola/ of whiche I spake before
She doughter was/for as by coniecture
Hem thought she was a nother creature

For though that euer vertuous was she
She was encreased in swiche excellence
Of thewes good/set in hye bounte
And so discrete/and fayre of eloquence
So benygne/and digne of reuerence
And couthe the peoples hertes so embrace
That ethe her loued that loked in her face

Not only of Saluce in the toun
Publysshed was the bountie of her name
But eke beyonde/in many a regioun
If one sayd wel/an other sayd the same
So spradde of her bountie the fame
That men & women/bothe ponge and olde
Gone to Saluces her to beholde.

This Walter lowly/ and full royally
Wedded hath with fortunate honestie
In goddes peace: lyueth full easely
At whom/ & out warde grace ynough had he
And for he sawe that vnder lowe degre
Was honest vertue hyd/the people him helde
A prudent man/and that is seene wel selde.

Not only this Grisylde/ through her wyt
Couthe al the feate of wyfely humblesse
But eke/when the case requyred it.
The comyn profyte couthe she redresse
There nas discorde/rancour/ne heuynesse
In al the londe/that she ne couthe appese
And bring hem all wisely in rest and ese

Though

Though her husbonde absent were or none
If gentilmen/ or other of her contre
Were wrothe/ she wolde bring hem at one
So wyse and rype wordes had she
And iugement of so great equite
That she fro heuen sent was/ as men wende
People to saue/ and euery wronge to amende.

¶ Not longe tyme after this Griselde
Was wedded/ she a doughter had ybore
Al had she leuer haue borne a man chylde
Glad was the Markes and his folke therfore
For though a mayde childe came al before
She may to a man childe attayne
By kyndelyhode/ sythens she is not barayne.

¶ Explicit pars secunda: Et incipit pars tercia.

There fel/ as it befalleth oft tymes mo
Whan ỳ this childe had sucked but a throwe
This Markes in his herte longed so
To tempte his wyfe/ her sadnesse to knowe
That he ne myght out of his herte throwe
This marueylous desyre/ his wyfe to assaye
Needelesse god wot/ he thought her to affray

He had assayed her ynoughe before
And fonde her euer good/ what needeth it
Her for to tempte: & al way more and more
Though some man praise it for a subtyl wyt
But as for me/ I say ful yuel it syt
To assay a wyfe/ whan that it is nede
And put her in anguysshe and in drede

For which this Markis wente vnto this manere
He came alone a nyght there as she lay
With sterne face/ and right ful cruel chere
And sayd thus: Griselde (quod he) that day
That I the toke out of thy poore aray
And put the in estate of hye noblesse
Thou hast not that forgoten/ as I gesse

I say Griselde/ the present dignyte
In whiche I haue put the/ as I trowe
Maketh not the forgetfull for to be
That I the toke in poore astate ful lowe
For any wele/ thou must thy selfe knowe
Take hede of euery worde what I sey
There is no wight that hereth but we tweye

Thou wottest thy self/ how ỳ thou came here
In to this house/ it is not longe ago
And though to me thou be bothe lefe and dere
Vnto my gentyls thou art nothyng so
They say/ to hem it is great shame and wo
For to ben subiette/ and ben in seruage
To the/ that borne arte in so smal a village

And namely sythe thy doughter was ybore
These wordes haue they spoken doutles
But I despyse/ as I haue done byfore
To lyue my lyfe with hem/ in rest and pees
I may not in this case be recheles
I mote done with thy doughter/ for the best
Not as I wolde/ but as my gentyls lest

And yet god wote/ this is ful lothe to me
But natheles without thy wetyng
I wol naught do/ but thus I wol (quod he)
That thou to me assent/ as in this thyng
Shewe now thy pacience/ in thy werkyng
That thou me hight and swore in our village
That day that maried was our mariage

¶ Whan she had herde al this/ she not amoued
Neyther in worde/ in chere/ ne in countenaunce
For as it semed/ she was not agreued
She sayd lorde/ al lyeth in your plesaunce
My childe and I/ with hertely obeysaunce
Been yours al/ and ye may saue or spyll
Your owne/ worketh your owne wyll

There may nothyng/ so god my soule saue
Lyken to you/ that may displese me
Ne I desyre nothyng for to haue
Ne drede for to lese/ saue onely ye
This wyll is in my herte/ and aye shal be
No length of tyme/ or deth it may deface
Neyther chaunge my corage vnto another place

Glad

¶Glad was the thanne of her answering
But yet he fayned as he were not so
Al derry was his chere/and his lokyng
Whan that he shulde out of the chambre go
Sone after this/a fortnyght way or two
He purueyed had solde al his entent
Unto a man/and to his wyfe him sent

In maner of a sergeant was this prive man
The which he fayth ful ofte founde had
In thynges great/& eke such folke wel can
Done execucyon of thynges badde
The lorde knewe wel/he him loued & dradde
And whan this sergeant wyst his lordes wyl
In to the chambre he stalked him ful styll

¶Madame he sayd/ye mote forgeue it me
Though I do thing/which I am constrayned
ye be ful wyse/and full wel knowe ye
That lordes hestes may not be sayned
They may wel bewayled and complayned
But men must nedes unto her lust obey
And so wol I/there nis no more to sey

This childe I am comaunded to take
And spake no more/but vp the childe he hent
Dispytously/and gan a chere to make
As though he wolde haue slayne it or he went
Griselde must al suffre/and consent
And as a lambe/she sytteth meke and styll
And let this cruel sergeaunt do his wyll.

¶Suspecte was the fame of this man
Suspecte his face/suspecte his worde also
Suspecte the tyme in whiche he this began
Alas her doughter/that she loued so
She wende he wolde haue slayne it right tho
But natheles/she neyther wepte ne syked
Conformyng her to that the thanne lyked

But at the laste to speke she began
And meekely she the sergeaunt prayde
(So as he was a worthy gentilman)
That she might kysse her childe er it deyde
And in her barme/this lytel childe she leyde
With ful sadde face/and gan the childe dresse
And lulled it/and after gan it blesse

And thus she sayd in her benygne wyse
Farwel my childe/I shal the neuer se
But sythen I haue marked the with the croyce
Of thilke father yblessed mote thou be
That for vs dyed vpon the rode tree
Thy soule lytel childe/I him betake
For this nyght shalte thou dyen for my sake

¶I trowe that to a norice in this caas
It had ben harde/this routhe for to se
Wel might a mother than crye alas
But natheles/so sadde and stedfast was she
That she endured al her aduersyte
And to the sergeaunt meekely she sayde
Haue here agen your lytel yonge mayde

And goth now we (qd she) & doth my lordes hest
And o thyng wolde I praye you of your grace
But if my lorde forbyd it you at the leste
Buryeth this lytel body in some place
That no bestes ne bryddes it to race
But he no worde to that purpose wolde say
But tolde the childe/and went anon his way.

This sergeaunt came to the lorde agayne
And of Griseldes wordes/and of her chere
He tolde him worde by worde/short & playne
And him presented with his doughter dere
Somwhat this lorde had routh l his manere
But natheles/his purpose held he styll
As lordes done/whan they wol haue her wyll

And badde the sergeaunt that ful prively
He shuld this childe wel softe wynde & wrappe
With al the circumstaunces tenderly
And carye it in a cofre/or in a lappe
But on payne of his heed of to swappe
That no man shulde knowe of his entent
Ne whens he came/ne whyther he went

But at Bolayne/to his suster dere
That thilke tyme of Panye was countesse
He shulde it take/and shewe her this matere
Besechyng her to done her busynesse
This childe to fostre in al gentylnesse
And whose childe it was/he bade her hyde
From euery wyght/for ought that myght betyde

This

This sergeaũt goth/ & hath fulfylled this thig
But to this Markes now we retourne we
For now we gothe he ful ofte ymagynyng
If by his wyues chere/he myght se
Or by her wordes/ perceyue that she
Were chaunged/but he neuer coulde fynde
But euer in one ilyke sadde and fynde

As glad/as humble/as busy in seruyse
And eke in loue/as she was wont to be
Was she to him/in euery maner wyse
Ne of her doughter one worde spake she
None accident/ for none aduersyte
was sene in her/ne neuer her doughters name
Nempned she/ for ernest ne for game.

¶ Explicit tertia pars: Et incipit pars quarta.

In this estate/ passed ben foure yere
Er she with child was/but as god wolde
A man childe she bare by this Walter
Wel gracious/ and fayre to beholde
And whan folke it to the father tolde
Not onely he/but al the countre merye
Was for the childe/ & god they thonke & herye

Whan it was two yere olde/ & from the brest
Departed from his norice on a daye
This Markes caught yet another lest
To tempten his wyfe efte sones/ if he may
No nedelesse was she tempted/I dare wel saye
But wedded men ne conne no mesure
Whan they fynde a patient creature.

¶ Wife (qd this Markes) ye haue herd or this
My people hereby heareth our mariage
And namely sythen my sonne borne is
Now is it worse than euer in our age
The murmure sleeth myn herte & my corage
For to myn eares cometh the voyce so smerte
That it wel nye distroyed hath my herte

Now say they thus/whan Walter is agone
Than shal the bloode of Janycola succede
And ben our lorde/for other haue we none
Suche wordes say my people/it is no drede
Wel ought I of suche murmure take hede
For certaynly I drede suche sentence
Though they not plainly speke I myn audience

I wolde lyue in peace/if that I myght
Wherfore I am disposed vtterly
As I his suster serued by nyght
Right so I thynke to serue him priuely
Thus warne I you/that ye not sodaynly
Out of your self/for no wo shulde outraye
Bethe patient/and therof I you praye.

¶ I haue(qd she) sayd/and euer shall
I wol ne nyl nothyng certayne
But as you lyst: Nought greueth me at all
Though þ my doughter & my sone be slayne
At your cõmaundement: this is to sayne
I haue had no parte of childrẽ twayne
But first sykenesse/ & after wo and payne

Ye ben our lorde/dothe wt your owne thinge
Right as you lyste/ and taketh no rede of me
For as I lefte at home my clothyng
Whan I came first to you/right so(qd she)
Lefte I my wyll/and al my lyberte
And toke your clothing: wherfore I you pray
Do your wyl/I wol to it obay

And certes/if I had prescience
Your wyll to knowe/er ye your lyste me take
I wolde it done/without negligence
But now we I wote your lust/ & what ye wolde
Al your plesaunce/ sikerly I holde
For wyste I that my deth wolde don you ese
Gladly wolde I suffre it you to plese

Dethe may make no comparysoun
Vnto your loue: And whan this Markes say
The constaũce of his wyfe/he caste adoun
His eyen two: and wondred how she may
In suche patience/ suffreth al this array
And forthe he gothe/with drery countenaũce
But to his herte/it was ful great plesaunce

This

¶ This eygre sergeant/ in the same wyse
That of her doughter caught/ right so he
Of wolfe if he coulde werke deuyse
Hath hent her sonne/ ꝑ was full of beaute
And euer in one/ so pacient was she
That she no token made of heynesse
But kyssyth her childe/ & after gan him blesse

Save this she prayde him/ if that he myght
Her litell sonne he wolde in erthe grave
His tendre lymmes/ delycate to syght
Fro fowles and fro bestes to save
But she none answere of him myght have
He went his way/ as he nothing ought
But to Bolcyne he tenderly it brought.

¶ This Walter wondred euer lenger ꝑ more
Upon her pacience/ and if that he
Ne had sothely knowen ther before
That parfytely her children loued she
He wolde have wende/ that for some subtelte
And of malyce/ or cruel corage
That she had suffred this with sadde vysage.

But he knewe wel/ ꝑ nedes him selfe certayne
She loued her children best/ in euery wyse
But now of women wolde I asse fayne
If these assayes myght not suffyse
What coulde a sturdy husbonde more deuyse
To preue her wyfehode/ and her stedfastnesse
But if contynuyng euer in sturdynesse

But there be folke of suche condicion
That when they han a certayne purpose take
They cowth not stynte of her entencion
But as they were bounden to a stake
They wol not of that purpose slake
Right so this Walter/ hath fully purposed
To tempte his wyfe/ as he was first disposed

He wayteth/ if by wordes or countenaunce
She were to him chaunged of corage
But never coulde he fynde variaunce
She was ay one in one herte and vysage
And ever the further that she was in age
The more trewe (if it were possyble)
She was to him in loue/ and more penyble.

For which it semeth thus/ that of hem two
There was but one wyll: for as Walter lest
The same lust was her plesaunce also
And god be thonked/ all fel for the beste
She shewed wel/ for no worldly unreste
A wyfe/ as for her selfe/ nothing shulde
Wyllen in effecte/ but as her husbonde wolde.

¶ The sclaunder of Walter/ wyde where spradd
That of cruel herte/ ful wretchedly
(For he a poore woman wedded had)
Hath murdred bothe his children prively
Whyche murmure was amonge hem comenly
No wonder was: for to the peoples eye
Ther cāe no worde/ but ꝑ they murdred were

For whyche/ there as his people ther before
Had loued him wel/ disclaundred of his defame
Made hem/ that they hated him therfore
To hen a murtherer is an hatefull name
But natheles/ for ernest or for game
He of his cruel purpose wolde not stent
To tempt his wyfe/ was al his entent.

¶ Whan ꝑ his doughter. vii. yere was of age
He to the courte of Rome/ in subtel wyse
(Enfourmed of his wyl) sent his message
Comaundyng hem/ suche bylles to deuyse
As to his cruel purpose may suffyse
How that the pope/ for his peoples reste
Bade him wedde another/ if that him leste

I say he bade/ they shulde counterfete
The popes bulle/ makyng mencion
That he hath leue/ his first wyfe to lete
As by the popes dispensacion
To stynte rancoure and dissencion
Betwyxt his people & him/ thus spake ꝑ bulle
The whyche they han publysshed at the full.

¶ The rude people/ as no wonder nys
Wenden ful well/ it had ben right so
But when these tydinges come to Grisyldis
I deme/ that her herte was ful wo
But she was hyghe sadde euermo
Disposed was this humble creature
The aduersyte of fortune to endure

Abydyng euer his luste and his plesaunce
To whom she was yeuen/ hert and all
As to her worldly suffysaunce
But certaynly/if I this storie tel shall
This Walles pwritten hath in speciall
A letter/in whiche he shewed his entent
And pryuely/ he it to Bologne sent

To the erle of Pauy/whiche that had tho
Wedded his suster: he prayde specially
To bringen him ayen his children two
In honorable estate al openly
But one thyng he him prayde al bitterly (re
That he to no wight/though men wold enque
Shulde telley whose children they were

But say that the mayden shulde wedded be
Vnto the Walles of Saluce anon
And as the erle was prayde/so dyd he
For at a day yfette/he on his way is gone
Towarde Saluce/and lordes many one
In ryche arap/this mayden for to gyde
Her ponge brother rydyng by her syde

Arayed was towarde her maryage
This mayden fressh/ful of gemmes clere
And her brother/that seuen yere was of age
Arayed was eke fresshely in his manere
And thus in great noblesse and glad chere
Towarde Saluce/ shapen her iournay
Fro day to day/rydyng southe her way.

Explicit quarta pars: Et sequitur pars quinta.

Amonge al this/after his wicked vsage
This Walles his wyfe yet to tempten more
(To the bitterest proefe of her corage
Fully to haue experience and lore
If that she were as stedfaste (as before)
He on a day in open audyence
Ful boystously hath sayd her this sentence.

Certes Griselde/I had ynough of pleasaū
To han you to my wyfe/for your goodnesse
And for your trouthe/and your obeysaunce
Not for your lynage/ne for your richesse
But I nowe knowe in very sothfastnesse
That in great lordshyp/if I me wel auyse
There is great seruytude in sondrie wyse

I may not done/as euery ploughman may
My people me constraineth for to take
Another wyfe/and crien day by day
And eke the pope/this rancoure for to slake
Consenteth it/that dare I vndertake
And truely/thus moche I wol you say
My newe wyfe is comyng by the way

Be stronge of herte/I bydde anon her place
And thilke dowery that ye broughte to me
Take it ayen/I graunte it of my grace
Retourneth to your fathers house (qd he)
No man may alway haue prosperite
With euen herte/I rede you to endure
The stroke of fortune/or of auenture.

And she ayen answerde in pacience:
My lorde (qd she) I wote and wyste alway
Howe that bytwyxt your magnificence
And my pouert/no man can ne may
Maken no comparyson/it is no nay
I helde me neuer digne in no manere
To ben your wyfe/ne yet your chamberere

And in this house/there ye me lady made
(The hye god take I/as for my witnesse
And al so wysely/ as he my soule glade)
I helde me neyther lady ne maystresse
But humble seruaunt to your worshypnesse
And euer shal/ whyle my lyfe may endure
Abouen euery worldly creature

That ye so longe of your benygnite
Haue holde me in honour and nobley
(Where I was not worthy for to be)
That thonke I god & you/to whom I prey
So yelde it you/there is no more to sey
Vnto my father gladly wol I wende
And with him dwell to my lyues ende

Here

There I was fostred of a childe ful small
Tyl I be deed/my lyfe there wol I lede
A wydowe clene in herte/body and all
For sythen I pave to you my maydenhede
And am your trewe wyfe/it is no drede
God shylde suche a lordes wyfe to take
Another may/to husbonde at to make

And of your newe wyfe/god of his grace
So graunt you welthe and hyghe prosperite
For I wol gladly yeue her my place
In whiche I was dysposed wonte to be
For sothely it lyketh you my lorde(q̄ she)
(That whylom weren al my hertes reste)
That I shal gon: I shal go whan you leste.

Out there as ye me profred suche dowayne
As I first brought/it is wel in my mynde
It were my wretched clothes/nothing fayne
The which to me now were ful harde to fynde
Oh/good god: how we gentil and how we kynde
Ye semed by your speche and your vysage
The day that maked was our mariage:

But sothe is sayd/algate I fynde it trewe
For in effecte it is proued now on me
Loue is not olde/as whan it is newe
For certes lorde/for none aduersyte
To dyen in this case/it shal neuer be
That euer in worde or worke I shal repent
That I you have myn herte in good entent

My lorde ye wote/that in my fathers place
Ye dyd me stryppe out of my poore wede
And richely ye cladde me of your grace
To you brought I nought els out of drede
But sothe/nakednesse/and maydenhede
But here ayen your clothyng I restore
And eke my weddyng ringe for euermore

The remenaunt of your iewels redy be
Within your chambre/dare I safely sayne
Naked out of my fathers house(q̄ she)
I came: and naked I must turne ageyne
All your pleasaunce wolde I folow fayne
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smocklesse out of your paleys went

Ye couldē not do so dishonest a thyng
That elle wombe/in which your childrey lay
Shulde before the people/in my walking
Be seen al bare: wherfore I you pray
Let me not lyke a wombe go by the way
Remembreth you myn owne lorde so dere
I was your wyfe/thoughe I vnworthy were

Wherfore in reward of my maydenhede
Which I to you brought/& not ayen bere
As bouchesafe to yeue me to my mede
But suche a smocke as I was wonte to were
That I therwith may wrie ꝑ wombe of here
That was your wyfe: & here I take my leue
Of you/myn owne lorde/lest I you greue.

The smock (q̄ he) ꝑ thou haste on thy backe
Let it be styll/and bere it forthe with the
But wel vnweth that worde he spake
But went his way/for routhe and pyte
Before the folke her selfe stryppeth she
And in her smocke/with foote & heed al bare
Toward her fathers house forthe is she fare

The folke folowed wepyng in her wey
And fortune euer they cursed as they gone
But she fro wepyng kept her eyen dry
Ne in this tyme/worde spake she none
Her father/that this tydynges herde anone
Cursed the day and tyme/that nature
Shope him to bey a lyues creature

For out of doute/this olde poore man
Was euer suspecte of her mariage
For euer he demed/sythen it began
That whan the lorde islyked had his corage
Him wolde thinke it was a disparage
To his estate/so lowe for to alyght
And sodeyn her/as sone as euer he might.

Anenst his doughter hastely gothe he
(For he by ꝑ noyse of folke knew her comyng)
And with her olde cote/as it might be
He couered her/ful soft wepyng
But on her body might he it not bring
For rude was the clothe/& she more of age
By dayes fele than was her mariage.

Thus

¶ Thus with her father/ for a certayne space
Dwelleth this flowre of wyfely patience
That neuer by her wordes/ne by her face
Before the folke/ne eke in absence
Ne shewed she/that her was done offence
Ne of her hye estate no remembraunce
Ne had she/as by her countenaunce.

No wonder is/for in her great estate
Her goste was euer in playne humplite
No tender mouthe/ne herte delycate
Ne pompe/ne semblaunce of royalte
But full of patience and benygnyte
Discrete/and prudelesse/ and ape honorable
And to her husbonde euer meke and stable.

¶ Men spoke of Job/ & most of his holynesse
As clerkes (whan hem lyste) can wel endyte
Namely of men: but of stedfastnesse
Though clerkes praise women but a lyte
There can no man in humblesse hem acquyte
As women can: ne be halfe so trewe
As women ben/but it befall of newe.

¶ Explicit quinta pars: et sequitur pars sexta.

Fro Bolayne is the erle of Pauy come
Of whiche the same stronge to more & lesse
And to the peoples eeres/al and some
Was couthe eke/how a newe Marquesesse
He with him brought/ i pompe & such richesse
That was neuer seene with mannes eye
So noble aray/ in west Lumbardye.

¶ The Markes/that shope & knewe al this
Er ỳ this erle was come/sent his message
To thylke poore and sely Griselde
And she with humble herte/& glad vysage
Not with swellyng herte in her corage
Came at his heste/& on her knees her sette
And reuerently and wysely she him grette.

¶ Griselde (quod he) my wyll is stedely
This mayde/that wedded shal be vnto me
Receyued be to morowe al so royally
As it is possyble in my house to be
And eke that euery wyght in his degre
Haue his estate in sittyng and seruyse
And also pleasaunt/as ye can best deuyse

I haue no woman sufficient certayne
The chambres for to arraye in ordynaunce
After my lust: and therfore wolde I fayne
That thyn were al swithe contrariaunce
Thou knowest eke of olde al my plesaunce
Though thyn aray be badde/& yuel besey
Do thou thy deuer at the leste wey.

¶ Not onely lorde that I am glad (quod she)
To done your lust/but I desyre also
You for to please/and serue in my degre
Without feynyng/and shal euer mo
Ne neuer for no wele/ne for no wo
Ne shal the goste within my herte stent
To loue you best/ withal my trewe entent

And with ỳ worde/she gan the house to dyght
And tables to sette/and beddes to make
And payned her to done al that she myght
Prayeng the chamberers for goddes sake
To hasten hem/ and faste swepe and shake
And she the most seruysable of hem all
Hath euery chambre arayed/and his hall.

¶ Aboute vndren gan this erle alyght
That with hi brought these noble children tweye
For whiche the people ranne to se that syght
Of her araye/so ryche hy beseye
And than at erste amonges hem they seye
That Walter was no foole/ though hym lyste
To chaunge his wife: for it was for the beste

For she is fayrer/as they demen all
Than is Griselde/and more tender of age
And fayrer fruite bytwene hem shal fall
And more plesaunce/for her hye lynage
Her brother eke/so fayre was of vysage
That fyn to seen ỳ people had cause plesaunt
Comendyng now the Markes gouernaunce.

¶ O sterne people/ vnsad and vnstedfast
Ay vndiscrete/and chaungyng as a fane
Delyt

Delyting euer in rumer that is newe
For lyke the mowne euer waxe yt & wane
Lyght ful of clappyng/here ynough a tame
Your dome is false/your cõstaūce euel preueth
A ful great fool is he that on you leueth

Thus sayden sadde folke in that cyte
Whan that the people gased vp and doun
For they were gladde/right with the nouelte
To haue a newe lady of her toun
No more of this make I no we mencioun
But to Grisylde agen wol I me dresse
And tellen her constaunce/and her busynesse.

Wel busy was Grisylde on euery thyng
That to the fest was appertinent
Right naught was she abasshed of her clothing
Though they were rude/& somwhat to rent
But with glad cheere/to the yate is went
With other folke/to greten the Marquesesse
And after dothe she forthe her busynesse

With right glad cheere/ the gestes she receyueth
And busyously/euerych in his degre
That no man defaute there perceyueth
But euer they wondren/ what she might be
That in so poore aray was for to se
And coulde such honour/ and reuerence
And worthyly they praysen her prudence

In al the meane whyle she ne stente
This mayden and eke her brother to cõmende
With al her herte/and bensyne entente
So wel/ that no man couthe her prise amende
But at the laste/ whan these lordes wende
To setten ado wne to mete/he gan to call
Grisylde/as she was busy in the hall.

Grisylde(q̃ he) as it were in his play
Howe lyketh the my wyfe/and her beaute
Right wel my lorde(q̃ she)for my good fay
I saw er sawe I neuer none than she
I pray to god so yeue you prosperite
And so hope I/that he wol to you sende
Plesaunce ynough/ vnto your lyues ende.

But one thyng I beseche/ and warne also
That ye purse with no turmentyng

This tender mayden/as ye han do me
For she is fostred in her norysshyng
More tenderly/in my supposyng
She couthe not aduersyte endure
As couthe a poore fostred creature

And whan this Walter sawe her patience
Her glad cheere/and no malyce at all
And he so ofte hath done her offence
And she ay constante/and stable as a wall
Contynuyng euer her innocence ouer all
This sturdy Walter/gan his herte dresse
To rewe vpon her wyfely stedfastnesse.

This is ynough/Grisylde myne(q̃ he)
Be no more agaste/ne pale ne dismayde
I haue thy trouthe/and thy benygnite
As wel as euer woman was assayde
In great estate/or poorely arrayde
Now wot we wel I dere wyfe thy stedfastnesse
And her in armes toke/and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder/toke therof no kepe
She herde not what thing he to her sayde
She ferde as she had sterte out of her slepe
Tyl she out of her masednesse abrayde
Grisylde (q̃ he) by god that for vs deyde
Thou arte my wyfe/and none other I haue
Ne neuer had/as god my soule saue

This is thy doughter/which yͤ hast supposed
To ben my wyfe/and none other feythfully
And this shal ben myn heyr/as I haue disposed
Thou bare hem in thy body trewly
At Bolyne haue I kept hem sykerly
Take hem agen/for now mayst thou not say
That thou hast lorne any of thy children tway

And folke/that other wyse han sayd of me
I warne hem wel/ that I haue done this dede
For no malyce/ne for no crueltee
But for to assay in the the womanhede
And not for to slen my children/god forbede
But for to kepen hem preuely and styll
Tyl I thy purpose knewe/& all thy wyll

Whan she this herde/a swowne down she fel
For pytous ioy/& after her swounyng (lete
She

She bothe her ponge children to her calleth
And in her armes/ pitously wepyng
Enbraced hem bothe/tenderly kyssyng
Full lyke a mother/with her salte teres
She bathed bothe her vysage and her heres.

¶ O whiche a pytous thing it was to se
Her swounyng/ & her pytous voyce to here
Graūt mercy lorde/god thōke it you (qd she)
That ye have saued me my children dere
Now wot I wel I neuer to be dede right here
Sythen I stōde in your loue/ & in your grace
No force of dethe/ne whan my spyrite pace.

¶ O tendre/ O dere/ O ponge children myne
Your woful mother wende stedfastly
That cruell houndes/or some foule vermyne
Had eten you/ but god of his mercy
And your benygne father/so tenderly
Hath done you kepe: and in that same stounde
Al sodaynly she swapte downe to the grounde

And in her swounyng/so sadly holdeth she
Her children two/ whan she gan hem embrace
That with great sleyght and difficulte
The children from her armes they gan to race
O many a tere/on many a pytouse face
Downe ran/of hem that stoden there besyde
Vnneth aboute her myght no man abyde.

¶ Walter her gladdeth/ & her sorowe slaketh
She ryseth vp al abasshed from her traunce
And every wight her ioy and feest maketh
Yet she hath caught ayen her countynaunce
Walter her dothe so faythfully plesaunce
That it was deyntie to seen the chere
Betwixt hem two/whan they were met yfere.

¶ These ladyes/whan they her tyme sey
Han taken her/and into chambre goy
And stryppen her out of her rude array
And in a clothe of golde/that bright shone
With a crowne of many a ryche stone
Vpon her heed/they her in to hall brought
And there she was honoured as she ought.

Thus hath this pytous day a blissfull ende
For every man and woman dothe his might
This day in myrthe and reuel to dispende
Yl on the welken shone the sterres bright
For more solempne/in every mannes syght
This feest was/and greater of costage
Than was the reuel of her mariage.

¶ Ful many a yere/in hye prosperite
Lyuen these two/ in concorde and in rest
And richely his doughter maryed he
Vnto a lorde/ one of the worthyest
Of al Itayle/and than in peace and rest
His wyues father in his courte he kepte
Yl that his soule out of his body crepte

¶ His sonne succedeth in his heritage
In rest and peace/ after his fathers day
And fortunate was eke in mariage
Al put he not his wyfe in great assay
This wolde is not so stronge/ it is no nay
As it hath ben in olde tymes yore
And herkeneth what thauntour sayth therfore.

¶ This story is sayd/not for ỳ wyues sholde
Folowen Grisylde/as in humylite
For it were importable/ tho they wolde
But that every wight in his degre
Shulde be constaunte/ in al aduersyte
As was Grisilde/wherfore Petrarke writeth
This storye/whiche with hye style he endyteth

For sythe a woman was so pacient
Vnto a mortall man/wel more we oughte
Receyue al in gree that god vs sent
For great skyll he pleneth that he wroughte
But he ne tempteth no man that he boughte
As saythe saynt Jame/ if ye his pystel rede
He preueth folke but a day/it is no drede

And suffreth vs as for our exercyse
With sharpe scourges of aduersyte
Wel ofte to be beaten/in sondrie wyse
Not for to know our wyll/for certes he
Or we were borne/ knewe al our frelte
And for our beste/as al his gouernaunce
Let vs lyue than in vertuous suffraunce

But oure wode sersenetth soudynges ofte ỳ
Is ful harde to fynde now a dayes

God

Yf ak a counter Grisyldes thre or two
For if they were put to suche assayes
The golde of hem hath so bad a layes
Wyth brasse/ for though it be fayre at eye
It wolde rather braste a two than playe

For which here / for the wyues loue of Bathe
Whose lyfe and secte/ mighty god mayntene
In hygh maistry/ or elis were it scathe
I wyl with lusty herte/ fresshe and grene
Saye you a songe/ to glade you I wene
And let be stynte of ernest matere
Herkeneth my songe/ that saith in this maniere.

Lenuoye de Chaucer a les
mariz de nostre temps.

Grisylde is deed/ and eke her pacience
And bothe at ones buryed in Italye
For whiche I crye in open audience
No wedded man be so hardy to assayle
His wyues pacience/ in trust to fynde
Grisyldes/ for in certayne he shal fayle.

O noble wyues/ ful of high prudence
Let no humylite your tonge nayle
Ne let no clerke haue cause ne diligence
To write of you a storie of suche mervayle
As of Grisylde/ patient and kynde
Lest Chichyface swalowe you in her entayle

Folweth Eco/ that holdeth no silence
But euer answereth at the countre tayle
Beth not abaysed for your innocence
But sharpely taketh on you the gouernayle
Emprinteth wel this lesson in your mynde
For comen profyt/ sythens it may auayle

Ne barbetes hem not/ both hem no vauntance
For though thyn husbande armed be in mayle
The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest/ and eke his aventayle
In ielousye I rede eke loke thou holde
And yf shal make him comune as bothe a payre

Yf thou be fayre/ there folke hem in purchace
Dispende thou thy substaunce/ and thyn apparayle
Yf thou be foule/ be fers of thy dispence
To get the frendes aye do thy trauayle
Be ay of cheere/ as light as lefe on lynde
And let him care/ wepe/ wringe/ and waylo.

Ye archwyues / stoodeth ay at your defence
Syth ye be stronge/ as is a great camayle
Ne suffreth not/ that men do you offence
And ye slendre wyues/ feble as in batayle
Beth eygre as any tygre is in Inde
Ape clappeth as a mylle/ I you counsayle.

Here endeth ỹ clerkes tale of Or-
forde/ and here folweth the
wordes of our hoste.

This worthy clerk/ whan ended was his tale
Our hoste sayd and swore by cockes bones
Me were leuer than a barell of ale
My wyfe at home had herde this legende ones
This is a gentyle tale for the nones
As to my purpose/ wyste ye my wyll
But thyng that wol not be/ let it be stylle.

Here endeth the wordes of our hoste
and here folweth the Fran-
keleyns prologue.

These olde gentyll Britons in her dayes
Of dyuers aventures maden layes
Rymed first in her mother tonge
Whiche layes/ with her instrumentes they songe
Or elis redyn hem for her plesaunce
And one of hem haue I in remembraunce
Whiche I shall say / as wysely as I can
But sires/ bycause I am a borell man
At my begynnyng first I you beseche
Haue me excused of my rude speche
I lerned neuer rethorike certayne
Thyng that I speke/ mote be bare and playne
I slepte neuer on the mounte of Parnaso
Ne lerned neuer Marcus Tullius Cicero
Colours ne know I none/ withouten doute
But suche colours as growen in the mede
Or elis suche as men dyen or paynte
Colours of rethorike/ ben to me quaynte
My spyrite feleth not of suche matere
Thus is my tale/ if ye wol it here.

Here endeth the Frankel-
leyns prologue.

The

The Frankeleyns tale.

Here begynneth the Frankeleyns tale.

In Armorike/that called is Britayne
There was a knight/that loued & dyd his payne
To serue ladies in his beste wyse
And many a labour/& many a great emprise
He for his lady wrought/er she were wonne
For she was one the fayrest vnder sonne
And eke therto cõmen of so hye kynrede
That wel vneth durst this knyght for drede
Tel her his wo/his payne/and his distresse
But at the laste/she of her worthynesse
And namely for his meke obeysaunce
Hath suche a pyte caught of his penaunce
That pryuely she fyll of his accorde
To take him for her husbonde & her lorde
Of such lordshyp/as men haue ouer her wyues
And for to lede in the more blysse her lyues
Of his fre wyl/he swore her as a knyght
That neuer in al his lyse/day ne nyght
Ne shulde he take vpon him no maystrye
Agayne her wyl/ ne kythe her ialousye
But her obey/and folowe her wyl in al
As any louer to his lady shall
Saue that the name of soueraynte
That wolde he haue/for shame of his degree.
She thonked him/& with ful great humblesse
She sayd: sir/sythe of your gentylnesse
ye profred me to haue so large a rayne
Ne wolde god neuer dyt wyxt bytwayne
As in my gylte/were eyther werre or stryfe
Sir/I wol be your trewe humble wyfe
Haue here my trouthe/tyl that my herte breste
Thus bey they bothe in quiete and in reste.
For one thyng sir/ safely dare I seyne
That frendes/euery the other must obeyne
If they wol longe holden companye
Loue wol not be constrayned by maystry
Whan maystrye cometh/ the god of loue anon
Beateth his wynges/and farewel he is gon
Loue is a thing/ as any spyrite free
Women of kynde desyren lyberte
And not to be constrayned as a thrall
And so done men/(if I sothe say shall)
Loke who that most is patient in loue
He is at his auauntage al aboue
Pacyence is an hye vertue certayne
For it vanquysheth/as these clerkes sayne
Thynges that rygour shal neuer attayne
For euery worde men may not chyde or playne
Lerneth to suffre/or elles so mote I gone
ye shall it lerne/whether ye wol or none
For in this world certayne no wyght ther is

That

That he ne doth or saith sometyme a mys
Jet: sickenesse/ or constellacion
Wyne/ wo/ or chaungyng of complexion
Causeth full ofte to don a mysse or spekyn
Dy euery wrong/ a man may not be wrekyn
After the tyme/ must be temperaunce
To euery wight that can of gouernaunce
And therfore/ hath this worthy wise knyght
To lyue in ease/ suffraunce her hight
And she to him full wisely gan swere
That neuer shulde there be defaut in here
Here may men se/ humble and wise accorde
Thus hath she take her seruant & her lorde
Seruaunt in lowe/ and lorde in mariage
Than was he bothe in lordship and seruage
Seruage: nay/ but in lordship aboue
Sithen he hath bothe his lady and his loue
His lady certes/ and his wife also
The whiche that lawe of londe accordeth to
And whan he was in this prosperite
Home with his wife he goth/ in to his countre
Nat fer fro Demarke/ther his dwelling was
Where as he lyueth in ioye and in solas
Who coude tell/ but he had wedded be
The ioye/ the ease/ and the prosperite
That is betwyxt an husbande & his wife
Euermore lasted this blyssfull lyfe
Tyll that this knyght/ of which I speke thus
That of Cayre Juda/ was cleped Arueragus
Shope him to dwell/ a yere or twayne
In Englande/ that cleped was Dulayne
To seken in armes worship and honour
For all his lust he sette in suche labour
And dwelt there two yere/ the boke saith thus
¶ Nowe woll I stynt of this Arueragus
And speke I woll of Dorigen his wife
That loueth her husbonde as her hertes lyfe
For his absence/ wepeth she and syketh
As don these noble wyues whan hem lyketh
She mourneth/ wayleth/ fasteth/ & playneth
Desire of his presence/ her so constrayneth
That all this wyde worlde set she at nought
Her frendes/ whiche knewe her heuy thought
Conforten her/ in all that euer they may
They preche her/ and telle her night & day
That causeles she slewe her selfe/ alas
And euery comfort possyble in this cas
They don to her/ with all her busyneese
And all for to make her leue her heuynesse.
¶ By processe/ as ye knowen euerychone
Thay nowen so longe grauen in a stone
Tyll some figure therin printed be
So longe han they comforted her/ tyll she
Receyued hath by hope and by reson
The endurying of her constellacion
Through which her great sorow gan aswage
She may not alway indure such a rage
And eke Arueragus in al this care
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare
And that he wol come hastely agayne
Or elles had this sorowe her herte slayne.
Her frendes sawe her sorowe gan to slake
And prayden her on knees/ for goddes sake
To come and romey in her compayne
Away to dryuen her derke fantasye
And fynally she graunted that requeste
For wel she sawe it was for the beste.
¶ Nowe stode her castel faste by the see
And ofte with her frendes walked she
Her to disporte on the bankes hey
Where as she may shyppes and barges sey
Sayling her course/ where hem lyst go
But yet was that a parcel of her wo
For to her selfe ful ofte alas sayd she
Is there no shyppe/ of so many as I se
Wol bring home my lorde: than were my herte
Warisshed of these bytter paynes smerte.
¶ Another tyme/ wolde she sytte and thynke
And caste her eyen downwarde fro the brinke
But whan she sawe the grysly rockes blake
For very feare/ so wolde her herte quake
That on her fete she myght not her susteine
Than wolde she sytte adowne vpon the greene
And pitously in to the see beholde
And say right thus/ with sorouful spekes colde
¶ Eterne god/ that through thy purueyaunce
Ledest this worlde/ by certayne gouernaunce
In vayne as men sayn/ doste thou nothing make
But lorde/ these grysly feendly rockes blake
That semen rather a foule confusyon
Of werke/ than a fayre creacion
Of suche a parfyte god/ wyse and ful stable
Why haue ye wrought this werke vnreasonable?
For by thus werke/ northe/ south/ west/ ne este
There nys yfostred/ man/ bryde/ ne beste
It dothe no good/ but anoyeth

Se ye not lorde / how mankinde it distroyeth
An hundred thousande bodyes of mankynde
Haue rockes islayn / al be they not in mynde
Syn mankynd is so fayre a pte of thy werke
That thou it madest like thyn owne werke
Than semed it ye had a great chorte
Towarde mankynde / but how that may it be
That ye suche menes makyn it to distroyen:
Which menes doyn no good / but euer anoyen.
¶ I wote wel clerkes wol sayne as hem lest
By argumentes / that al is for the best
Though I ne can not the causes wel knowe
But thilke god / ỹ made the wynde to blowe
As kepe my lorde / this is my conclusyon
To clerkes lete I al this disputacion
And wolde god that all these rockes blake
Were sonken in to hell for his sake.
These rockes slee myn hert for feare
Thus wolde she say with many a pitous teare
Her frendes sawe it was for her no disport
To romen by the see / but discomfort
And shapen hem to playen somwhere elles
They seden her by ryuers and by welles
And eke in other places delytables
They dauncen and they playen at the tables
So on a day / right in the morowe tyde
Vnto a gardayne / that was there besyde
In whiche that they had made her ordynaunce
Of vitayles / and other purueyaunce
They goyn and playen hem al the longe day
And this was in the fyfte morowe of May
Which May hath painted with his soft shoures
This gardayne ful of leues and of flowres
And craft of mannes honde so curiously
Arayed had this garden truely
That neuer nas there garden of suche prise
But if it were the very paradyse
The odour of flowres / and the freshe fyght
Wolde haue made any herte lyght
That euer was borne / but if to gret sickenesse
Or to great sorowe helde it in distresse
So was it ful of beautie / with plesaunce.
And after dyner gonne they daunce
And synge also / saue Dorigene alone
That yet vnto her selfe made her mone
For she ne sey him on the daunce go
That was her husbonde / and her lone also
But natheles / she muste her tyme abyde
And with good hope / let her sorowe slyde.
¶ Vpon this daunce / amonge other men
Daunced a squier before Dorigen
That freshest was / and iolyer of aray
As to my dome / than is the monthe of May
He syngeth / & daunceth / passyng euery man
That is or was / sythen the worlde began
And therwithal / a mery shulde him discryue
One of the beste faryng men on lyue
Yonge / stronge / vertuous / riche / and wyse
And wel beloued / and holden of great pryse
And shortly / if I the sothe tel shall
Vnwetyng of this dongene at all
This lusty squier / seruaunt to Venus
Whiche ycleped was Aurelius
Had loued her beste of any creature
Two yere and more / as was his auenture
But neuer durst he tell her his grenaunce
Withouten cuppe he dronke al his penaunce
He was disparyed / nothyng durst he say
Save in his songes / somwhat wold he wray
His wo / as in generall complaynyng
He sayd he loued / and was beloued nothyng
Of whiche matere made he many layes
Songes / complaynes / roundels / virelayes
How that he durste not his sorowe tell
But langwyssheth / as dothe a fury in hell
And dye he muste (he sayd) as dyd Ecco
For Narcissus / that durst not tell his wo.
¶ In other manere than ye herde me say
Hedurste not he to her his wo bewray
Haue peraventure somtyme at daunces
There yonge folke kepen her obseruaunces
It may wel be / he lyked on her face
In suche a wyse / as men that asken grace
But nothyng wyste she of his entent
Natheles it happed / er they thence went
Bycause that he was her neyghbour
And was a man of worshyp and honour
And had knowen him of tymes yore
They fel in speche / and so forthe more & more
Vnto his purpose than drowe Aurelius
And whan he sawe his tyme he sayd thus.
¶ Madame (qd he) by god ỹ this worlde made
So that I wyste / ỹ I might your hert glade
I wolde that day / that your Arueragus
Went ouer the see / that I Aurelius
Had went ther ỹ I shuld neuer come agayne

For

For wel I wote my seruyce is in vayne
My guerdon ryse but brestyng of myn herte
Madame rutth vpon my paynes smerte
For with one worde ye may me slee or saue
Here at your foote god wold ꝙ I were graue
I ne haue as nowe no leyser more to sey
Haue mercy swete/or ye wol do me dey.
¶ She gan to loke vpon Aurelyus
Is this your wyll (qõ she) and say ye thus?
Neuer erste (qõ she) ne wyst I what ye mente
But nowe I vnderstande Aurelyus your entente
By thilke god/that yaue me soule and lyfe
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewe wyfe
In worde ne I werke/as ferre as I haue wyt
I wol ben her to whom I am knyt
Take this for a fynal answere of me
But after this in play thus sayd she.
¶ Aurelyus (qõ she) vp goddes boute
yet wol I graunte you to ben your loue
(Syther I se you so pitously complayne)
Loke what day that endelonge Britayne
ye remeue al the rockes/stone by stone
That they ne let shyppe ne bote to gone
I say whã ye haue made these costes so clene
Of rockes/that there nys no stone yseene
Than wol I loue you best of any man
Here haue my trouth/in al that euer I can.
Is there nouȝt other grace in you (qõ he?)
¶ No by that lorde (qõ she) that maked me
For wel I wote that it shal neuer betyde
Let suche folye out of your herte glyde
What deyntie shulde a man haue in his lyfe
For to go loue a nother mannes wyfe?
That hath her body whan so that him lyketh
¶ Aurelius ful ofte sore syketh
Wo was Aurely/whan he this herde
And with a sorouful chere he thus answerde.
¶ Madame (qõ he) this were impossyble
Than mote I dye on sodayne dethe horrible
And with that worde he turned him anone.
¶ Tho come her other frendes enerichone
And in the alleyes romeden vp and down
And nothing wyste of this conclusioun
But sodaynly began to renuel newe
Vnto that the brighte sonne loste his hewe
For the orizont hath reft the sonne his syght
This is as mooche to say/as it was nyght
And home they gon in ioy and in solas
Haue onely wretched Aurelyus/alas
He to his house is gone with sorouful harte
He sayd he mygȝt not from his dethe asterte
Him semed/that he felte his herte colde
Vp to heuen his handes gan he holde
And on his knees bare/he set him adoun
And in his rauyng sayd this orisoun
For very wo out of his wytte he brayde
He ne wyst what he spake/but thus he sayde
With pytous herte hath his cõplaynt begonne
Vnto the goddes/and furste vnto the sonne
He sayd: God Apollo and gouernour
Of euery plante/herbe/tree/and flour
That yeuest after thy declynacion
To ilke of hem his tyme and ceson
As thyn herberow me chaungeth lowe or hye
Lorde Phebus/caste thy mercyable eye
On wretched Aurelyus/whiche am but loste
Lo lorde/my lady hath my dethe iswore
Without gylte/but thy benignyte
Vpon my deedly herte haue some pyte
For wel I wote lorde Phebus/if ye leste
Ye may me helpe saue my lady beste
Nowe vouche ye saue/that I you deuyse
Howe that I may be holpen ꝙ in what wyse.
¶ Your blisful suster Lucina the shene
That of the see is goddesse and quene
Though Neptunus hath deite in the see
yet emprisse abouen him is she
Ye knowen wel lorde/right as her desyre
Is to be quickened and lyghted of your fyre
For whiche that she foloweth you ful besily
Right so the see desyreth naturally
To folowen her that is goddesse
Bothe of the see/and ryuers more and lesse
Wherfore lorde Phebus/this is my requeste
Do this myracle/or do myn herte breste
That nowe next at this opposycion
Whiche in signe shal be the lyon
As praieth her so great a floode to bring
That fyue fadome at the leste/it ouer spring
The hyest rocke in Armorike Britayne
And let this floode dure yeres twayne
Than certes to my lady may I say
Holdeth your heste/the rockes ben away
Thus thyng may ye lightly done for me
Praye her to goon no faster course than ye
I say thus/praieth your suster that she go

No faster courſe than ye in yerre two
Than ſhal ſhe be at the ful alway
And ſpringe floode laſtyng bothe nyght & day
And but ſhe vouchſafe in ſuche manere
To graunte me my ſouereyne lady dere
Pray her to ſynken euery torke adoun
In to her owne derke regioun
Vnder the grounde/ there Pluto dwelleth in
Or neuermore ſhal I my lady wyn
Thy temple in Delphos/ wol I barefote ſeke
O lorde Phebus/ ſe the teres on my cheke
And on my payne haue ſome compaſſyon
And with that worde/ in ſwoune he fel adoun
And longe tyme he lay in a traunce.
His brother/ whiche ꝑ knew of his penaūce
Vp caught him/ and to bed him brought
Diſpeyred in this turment and this thought
Lette I this woful creature lye
Chese he whether he wol lyue or dye.
¶ Arueragus with heale and great honour
(As he that was of chyualry the floure)
Is comen home/ and other worthy men
O blyſful arte thou now Dorigen
That haſte thy luſty huſbonde in thyn armes
That freſſh knight/ ꝑ worthyman of armes
That loueth the/ as his owen hertes lyfe
Nothyng lyſt him to be ymaginatyfe
If any wight had ſpoken (while he was out)
To her of loue/ therof had he no dout
He entendeth nat to ſuche matere
But daūceth/ iuſteth/ & maketh her gode chere
And thus in ioye & blyſſe I let hem dwell
And of wofull Aurelius wol I tell.
¶ In langour and in turmente diſpeyred
Two yere and more/ lay wretched Aurelius
Er any ſote on erthe he myght goon
Ne comforte in this tyme had he none
Saue of his brother/ whiche was a clerke
He knewe of all this wo & all this werke
For to non other creature certayn
Of this matter/ durſt he no worde ſayn
Vnder his breſt he bare it more ſecre
Than euer dyd Pamphilus for Galathe
His breſt was hole without for to ſeen
But in his hert ay/ was the arowe keen
And well ye knowen that of a ſurgeryen
In ſurgery/ is perilous the cure
But men myght touche the arowe or come therby
His brother weped and wayled pryuely
Vntil the laſte him fel in remembraunce
That whyle he was at Orliens in Frāce
(As yonge clerkes that ben ſubtyle and auiſe)
To reden artes that ben curyouſe
Ben in every halle and in every ferme
Vnder the ſouereyne ſcience for to lerne
He him remembred that vpon a day
At Orliens in ſtudye a booke he ſey
Of magyke naturell/ whiche his felawe
That was in that tyme a bacheler of lawe
Al were he there to lerne another craft
Had pryuely vpon his deſke ylaft
Whiche booke ſpake of moche ſuperſtycyons
Touching the houre and tyme of mariſyons
That longen to the moone/ and ſuche folye
As in our dayes is not worthe a flye
For holy churche ſayth in our byleue
Ne ſuffreth none illuſyon vs to greue
And whan this booke was in his remembraūce
Anon for ioye his herte gan daunce
And to him ſelue he ſayd pryuely
My brother ſhal be warriſſhed ſykerly
For I am ſyker that there be ſcyences
By whiche men maken dyuerſe apparences
Suche as theſe ſubtyle tregetours play
For oft at feeſtes haue I wel herde ſay
That tregetours/ within an hall large
Haue made come in water and a barge
And in the hall rowen vp and doun
Somtyme hath ſemed a grym lyoun
And ſomtyme flowres ſpring as in a mede
Somtyme a vyne/ and grapes whyte & rede
Somtyme a caſtel of lyme and ſtone
And whan him lyſted/ voyden hem anone
Thus ſemed it to euery mannes ſyght.
¶ Now thanne conclude I thus/ that ꝑ I myght
Of Orliens ſome olde felawe fynde
That had this moones mancyons in mynde
Or other magyke naturell aboue
He ſhulde wel make my brother haue his loue
For with an apparaunce a clerke may make
To mannes ſyght/ that all the rockes blake
Of Britayne/ were voyded euerychone
And ſhyppes by the brinke to come & gone
And in ſuche ſoume endure a yere or two
Than were my brother warriſſhed of his wo
Than muſt ſhe nedes holde her behete

Or ele he shal shame her at the feste.
¶ What shulde I make a longer tale of this
Vnto his brothers bedde he comen is
And suche comforte he gaue him for to gone
To Dispaunce/ that he his sterte anone
And on his way than is he forthe ystare
In hope to ben lessed of his care.
¶ Whan they were comen almoste to ȳ cyte
(But if it were a two forlonge or thre)
A yonge clerke rowyng by him selfe they met
Whiche that in latyn thassaly hem gret
And after warde he sayd a wonder thyng
I know the cause of youre comyng
And er they farther any foote wente
He tolde hem al that was in her entente.
¶ This Breton clerke assayed him of selo was
The whiche he had knowen in olde dayes
He answerde him/ that they dede were
For whiche he wepte ofte ful many a tere.
¶ Downe of his horse Aurelius light anon
And with this magyen forthe is he gon
Home to his house/ and made him wel at ese
Hem lacked no vitaylle that hem might plese
So wel arayed an house as there was one
Aurelyus in his lyfe sawe neuer none.
¶ He shewed him/ or he went to supperе
Forestes and parkes/ ful of wylde dere
He sawe there hertes/ with her homes hye
The greteste that euer were sene with eye
He se of hem an hundred slayne with houndes
And some of arowes bled w' bytter woundes
He sawe/ whan bosked were the wylde dere
Thise faucones/ vpon a fayre ryuere
That with the hawkes han the heron slayne.
Tho sawe he knyghtes ryding in a playn
And after this he dyd him suche plesaunce
That he hem shewed his lady in a daunce
Of whiche him selfe daunced as him thought
And whā this maister/ ȳ this magike wrought
Sawe it was tyme/ he clapped his hondes to
And farewel oure reuel/ al was ago
And neuer out of his house
Whyle they sawe al this syght vnmerueylouse
But in his studye there his bookes be
They soone ystyl/ no wight but they thre.
¶ To him this maister called his squyer
And sayd him thus/ is redy our supper
Almoste an houre it is/ I vnderstande
Tyther I pray the bere our supper redy swythe
When that these worthy men went were out
Into my studye/ there as my bokes be
¶ Sir (qō the squyer) whan it lyketh you
It is al redy/ though ye wel right now.
¶ Go we soppe than (qō he) for the best
These amerous folke some reste nede fest
And after supper fell they in trete
What some shuld this maisters guerdon be
To remeue al the rockes of Britayne
And eke from Gerdde to the mouth of sayne.
¶ He made it straūge/ & swore so god him saue
Lasse thā a thousāde pounde wold he not haue
Ne gladly for that some nolde he it don.
¶ Aurelyus with blyssful herte anon
Answerde thus: Fye on a thousande pounde
This wyde worlde/ which men say is rounde
I wolde it preue/ if I were lorde of it
This bargayne is ful due/ for we be knyt
Ye shal be payde truely by my trouthe
But lose nowe for no negligence or slouthe
Ye tarryen/ be here no lenger than to morowe
Nay (qō this clerke) here my trouth to borowe
¶ To bedde is gon Aurelius whan him lyste
And wel nye al nyght he had his reste
What for his labour/ and his hope of blysse
His woful herte of penaunce had a lysse.
¶ Vpon the morowe whan that it was day
To Britayne toke they the right way
Aurelius/ and this magicyen him bespde
And ben dyscended there they wolde abyde
And this was/ as the bokes dothe remembre
In the colde frosty seson of Decembre.
¶ Phebus wayed olde/ & hewed as pale as latoun
That afore in his hote declinacion
Shone as ȳ burnyng gold w' stremes bryght
But now in Capricorne adowne he lyght
Where as he shone ful pale/ I dare wel sayne
The bytter frostes/ with the sleet and rayne
Destroyed hath the grene in euery yerde
Janus sit by the fyre with double berde
And drynketh of his bugle horne the wyne
Biforn him stont braune of the tusked swyne
And nowel crieth euery lusty man.
¶ Aurelyus/ in al that euer he can
Doth to this maister chere and reuerence
And prayeth him to don his diligence
To bringen him out of his peynes smerte

Or with a swerde that he wolde slyt his herte.
This clerke suche routhe hath on this man
That nyght & day he spedeth him that he can
To wayte a tyme of his conclusyon
This is to say/ to make illusyon
Or suche an apparence or iogelrye
I ne can no termes of astrologye
That she and euery wight shulde wene & say
That of Britayne the rockes were away
Or els they were sonken vnder the grounde
Thus at the laste he hath his tyme yfounde
To make his iapes and his wretchydnesse
Of suche superstycious cursydnesse
His tollytan tables he forthe brought
Ful wel corrected/him lacked nought
Neyther his collecte/ne his expans yeres
Ne his rootes/ne his other geres
As hyn his centrys/and his argumentes
And his proporcionell conuenyences
For his equacions in euery thyng
And by his eyght spheres in his werkyng
He knew ful wel howe far alnath was shoue
Fro the heed of thylke fyxe Aries aboue
That in the nynthe spere consydred is
Ful subtelly he had calked al this
And whan he had founde his first mansyon
He knewe the remenaunt by proporcion
And knewe the rysing of the moone wele
And in suche sort/the terme and euery dele
And knewe also his other observaunces
For suche illusyons and suche mischaunces
As hethen folke vsed in thilke dayes
For whiche ne maked he no lenger delayes
But thrugh his magike/for a wyke or twayn
It semed that al the rockes were away.
Aurelyus/whiche that dispayred is
Whether he shal haue his loue/or sorte amys
Awayteth nyght and day on this myracle
And whan he knewe there was non obstacle
But that voyded were these rockes euerychon
Downe to the maysters fete he fel anon
And sayd/I wofull wicche Aurelius
Thanke you lorde and lady myn Venus
That me hath holpen fro my cares colde
And to ỹ temple his way forthe hath he holde
Where as he knewe he shulde se his lady se
And whan he sawe his tyme/ anon right he
With dredfull herte/& with humble chere
Salued hath his souerayne lady dere.
Thy ryghtful lady (q̃ this wofull man)
Whom I serue and loue/as I best can
And lothest were of al this world displese
Nere it that I for you haue suche disese
That I must dye here at your fete anon
Nought wold I tel you how wo me is begon
But certes either must I dye or playne
Ye slee me gyltyesse for very payne
But of my dethe/though ye haue no routhe
Auyseth yow/er that ye breken your trouthe
Repenteth you/for that ylke god aboue
For ye slee me/ bycause that I you loue
For madame/wel ye wote that ye haue ygyft
Not that I chalenge any thyng of right
Of you my souerayn lady/but of your grace
But in a garden yonde in suche a place
Ye wotte right wel what ye hyght me
And in myn honde your trouth plyght ye
To loue me best/ god wotte ye sayd so:
Al be it I am vnworthy therto
Madame I speke it for the honour of you
More than for to saue myn hertes lyfe now
I haue done right as ye cõmaunded me
And if ye vouchesafe/ye may go se
Doth as you list/haueth your heste in mynde
For quicke or dede/right ther ye shal me fynde
In you lythe al to do me lyue or deye
But wel I wote the rockes ben awaye
He tolde her leue/and she astonyed stode
In al her face there nas a droppe of blode
She wende neuer haue come in suche a trappe
Alas (q̃ she) that euer this shulde happe
For wende I neuer by possibilite
That such a myster or meruayle might be
It is ayenst the processe of nature
And home she gothe a sorouful creature
For very feare vnnethes may she go
She wepeth and wayleth a day or two
And swowneth/that it was routhe to se
But why it was to no wight tolde she
For out of towne was gon Arueragus
But to her selfe she spake/and sayd thus
In her complaynt/as ye shal after here
With face pale/& with sorouful chere.
Alas (q̃ she) on the fortune I playne
That vnware hast wrapped me/ thy chayne
Fro whiche to escape/wot I no socour

Save

Haue onely bene/or elles infamous
One of these two behoueth me to chese
But nathelesse/yet had I leuere to lese
My lyfe/than of my body to haue a shame
Or elles mot my selfe falle/or lese my name
And with my dethe I may be quyt iwys
Hath there not many a wyfe er this
And many a mayde/islayne her selfe alas
Rather than with her body done trespas
And certes so/these stories beren wytnesse
Whan thirty tyrantes/ful of cursednesse
Had slayne Phidon/in Athenes at the feest
They comaunded his doughters to areste
And bringen hem byfore hem in dispyte
Al naked/to fulfyl her foule delyte
And in her fathers bloode/he dyd hem daunce
Vpon the pauement/god yeue him mischaunce
For which these wofal maydens ful of drede
Rather than they wolde lesen her maydenhede
They prively ben fierte in to a well
And drenched hem selfe/as bokes tell.
¶ They of Messene let enquire and seke
Of Lacedomony fifty maydens eke
On whiche they wolde haue don her lecherye
But there was none of al that company
That she nas slayne: and with a glad entent
Chese rather for to dyen/than for to assent
To ben oppressed of her maydenhede
Why shulde I than to dye ben in drede.
¶ Lo eke the tyraunt Aristoclides
That loued a mayde/ yhight Stymphalydes
Whan that her father slayne was on a nyght
Vnto Dyanes temple gothe she anon right
And hente the ymage/with her armes two
Fro whiche image wolde she neuer go
No wight might fro it her handes race
Tyl she was slayne/right in the selfe place.
¶ Now sythens ỳ maidens had suche dispyte
To ben defouled with mannes foule delyte
Wel ought a wyfe rather her selfe slee
Than be defouled/as this rekketh me.
¶ What shal I say of Hasdruballes wyfe:
What at Cartage byraste her selfe her lyfe
For whan she sawe ỳ romanes wan the town
She toke her children al/and lepte adown
Into the fyre/and chese rather to dye
Than any romayn dyd her vilanye.
¶ Hath not Lucrece islayne her selfe/ alas
At Rome/there she oppressed was
Of Tarquine/for her thought it was shame
To lyue/when that she had lost her name.
¶ The eyght maydens of Melesye also
Han slayn hem selue for very drede and wo
Rather than folke of Gaule shuld hē oppresse
Wo than a thousande stories/as I gesse
Couthe I now we tel/as touchyng this matere.
¶ Whan Abradas was slayn/his wife so dere
Her selfe slowe/and let her bloode to glyde
In Abradas woundes/beode and wyde
And said/my body at the leste way
There shal no wight defoule if I may.
¶ What shulde I mo ensamples herof sayn:
Sythens that so many han hem selfe slayne
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be
I wol conclude that it is best for me
Wel rather slee my selfe in some maners
As dyd Demotions doughter dere
Byeause that she nolde not defouled be.
¶ O Sedasus/it is ful great pyte
To reden how we thy doughters dyden/alas:
That slowen hem selfe for such a maner caas
As great a pyte was it or wel more
The Theban mayden/that for Nichanore
For one of Macedone had her oppressed
With her dethe her maydenhede she redressed.
¶ What shal I sayne of Nycerates wyfe
That for suche case biraste her selfe her lyfe:
¶ How true was eke to Alcibyades
His lone/that for to dyen rather chees
Than for to suffren his body vnburyed be.
¶ Lo whiche a wyfe was Alceste (qd she)
What sayth Homere of good Penelope?
Al Grece knoweth of her chastyte.
¶ Parde of Laodomia is written thus
That whan at Troy was slayn Protheselaus
No lenger nolde she lyue after his day.
¶ The same of noble Portia tel I may
Withouten Brutus couthe she not lyue
To whom she had al her herte ygyue.
¶ The parfyte wyfehode of Arthemisy
Honoured is/throughout al Barbary
¶ Of Thenta quene/ thy wifely chastyte
To al wyues may a myrrour be.
The same thing I saye of Hipsa
Of Rodogune/and eke Valeria.
¶ Thus playned Dorigene a day or tweye
Purpos

Purposyng euer that she wolde dey
But natheles vpon the thirde nyght
Home came Arueragus the worthy knight
And asked her why she wept so sore
And she gan wepen euer longer the more
¶Alas (qd she) that euer was I borne
Thus haue I said (qd she) thus haue I sworn
And told him al/ as ye haue herde before
It nedeth not to reherse it no more.
¶Thus husbode w' glad chere in hous wyse
Answerde and sayd/as I shal you deuyse
Is there aught els Dorigene but this.
¶Nay nay (qd she) god helpe me so as wys
This is to moche/and it were goddes wyll.
¶Ye wyse (qd he) let slepe that is styll
It may be wel yet paraunture to day
Ye shal your trouthe holde by my fay
For god so wysly haue mercy on me
I had wel leuer ystyked for to be
For very loue/whiche that I to you haue
But if ye shulde your trouthe saue
Trouth is the hyest thing that man may kepe
But with that worde he brast anon to wepe
And said/I you forbyd on payne of dethe
That neuer whiles you laste eyther lyfe or breethe
To no wight tel of this mysauenture
As I may thryue I wol my wo endure
Ne make no countenaunce of heuynesse
That folke of you may deme harme ne gesse
And forthe he cleped a squier and a mayde
Gothe forthe anon with Dorigene he sayde
And bydeth her in suche a place anone
They token her leue/and on her way they gone
But they ne wyste why she thyder went
She nolde no wight tel her entent.
¶This squier/whiche that hyght Aurelyus
On Dorigen/ whiche that was so amerous
Of auenture happed her to mete
Amydde the towne/ right in the hye strete
As she wolde haue gon the way forthe right
Towarde the garden/there as she had hyght
And he was to the garden warde also
For wel he spyed whan she wolde go
Out of her house/to any maner place
But thus they met of auenture or of grace
And he saluteth her with glad entent
And asked of her whyder that she went.
¶And she answerde halfe as she were madde
Unto the garden as my husbonde bidde
My trouthe for to holde/ alas alas.
¶Aurelyus gan wonderly of this caas
And in his herte had great compassyon
Of her sorow/and of her lamentacyon
And of Arueragus the worthy knight
That bade her holde al that she had hyght
So loth him was his trouthe for to breke
And in his herte he caught of it great wreke
Consyderyng the beste on euery syde
That fro his lust were hem better abyde
Than do so hye a churlysshe wretchednesse
Agenst franchise/ and agenst al gentilesse
For whiche in fewe wordes said he thus
Madame/ sayth he to your lorde Arueragus
That sythen I se this great gentilnesse
Of him/ and eke I se wel your distresse
That ye to me thus shulde holde your trouthe
Certes me thynketh it were great routhe
I haue wel leuer euer to suffre wo
Than departe the loue bytwyxt you two
I you release madame into your honde
Quyte euery serement and euery bonde
That ye haue made to me/as here bysome
Sythens thilke tyme that ye were borne
My trouth I plight/ I shal you neuer repreue
Of no behest/and here I take my leue
As of the trewest and the beste wyfe
That euer yet I knewe in al my lyfe
But euery wight beware of her behest
On Dorigene remembreth at the lest
Thus can a squyer done a gentil dede
As wel as can a knight/ withouten drede.
¶She thonked him vpon her knees al bare
And home vnto her husbonde is she fare
And told him al/as ye han herde me sayde
And be ye syker/he was so wel apayde
That it were vnpossyble me to write
What shulde I longer of this case endyte?
Arueragus/ and Dorigen his wyfe
In souereyne blysse leden forthe her lyfe
Neuer after was there anger hem bytwene
He cherysshed her/as though she were a quene
And she was to him trewe for euermore
Of these two folkes ye get of me nomore.
Aurelyus/that his coste hath al forlorne
Curseth the tyme that euer he was borne
Alas (qd he) alas that euer I behyghte

Of purely golde a thousande pounde of weight
Unto this philosopher how we shall I do:
I ete no more/but that I am sorie
Of my heritage moste I nedes sell
And beg a begger/here may I no leger dwell
And shame of my byrthe my thinges all
But I of him may get better grace
But nathelesse I wol of him assay
At certayne dayes/yere by yere to pay
And thonke him of his great curtesye
My trouthe wol I kepe/I wol not lye.
¶ With herte sore/he gothe unto his coffre
And brought golde unto this philosopher
The value of fyue hundred pounde as I gesse
And him betaketh of his gentilnesse
To quyte him dayes of the remenaunt
And sayd: mayster I dare wel make auaunt
I fayled neuer of my trouthe as yet
For/ryght ly my dette shal be quyt
Towardes you/how we that euer I fare
To gon a begging in my vtter bare
But wolde ye vouchesafe upon surete
Two yere or thre for to respyte me
Than were I wel/for els must I sell
My herytage/there is no more to tell.
¶ This philosopher soberly answerde
And sayd thus/whan he this worde herde
Have I not holde couenaunt unto the?
Yes certes/wel and truely (quod he)
¶ Haste thou not had thy lady as the lyketh?
No no (quod he) and sorely he syketh
¶ What was the cause/tel me if ye thou can?
Aurelyus anon his tale began
And tolde him al as ye han herde byfore
It nedeth not to reherse it any more.
He sayd Arueragus of gentilnesse
Had leuer dye in sorowe and in distresse
Than his wyfe were of her trouthe fals
The sorowe of Dorigene he tolde him als
Howe lothe she was to ben a wycked wyfe
And that she had leuer have lost her lyfe
And ye her trouth she swore through innocence
Ne neuer erste herde speke of apparence
That made me have of her so great pyte
And right as frely as he sent her to me
As frely sent I her to him agayne
This is al a sayth/there vpo no more to sayne.
The philosopher answerde/leue brother

Euerich of you dyd gentilly to other
Thou art a squier/and he is a knyght
But god forbyd/for his blessed myght
But if a clerke coulde done a gentil dede
As wel as any of you/it is do drede.
Sir I release the thy thousande pounde
As now we thou were iuste out of the grounde
Ne neuer er now ne haddest thou sowen me
For sir/I wol not taken a peny of the
For al my craft/ne nought for my trauayle
Thou haste ipayed right wel for my bitayle
It is ynough/and farwel a haue good day
And tok his horse/a rode forthe on his way.
¶ Lordynges this question wold I aske now
Whiche was the moste fre/as thynketh you?
Now me telleth me/er that I ferther wende
I can no more/my tale is at an ende.

¶ Here endeth the Frankeleyns tale/
and begynneth the seconde
nonnes prologue.

The mynistre and the norice vnto vyces
Whiche ỹ men clepen in englisshe idlenesse
That is porter of the yate of delyces
To eschue/a by her contrarye her oppresse
That is to sayne/by lefull besynesse
Wel ought we to doy our entent
Lesie that the fende through idlenesse vs hent

For he that with his thousande cordes slye
Contynuelly vs wayteth to be slappe
Whan he may many in ydelenesse espye
He can so lightly catche him in his truppe
Tyl that a man be hente/right by the lappe
He nyp not ware the fende hath him in honde
Wel ought vs werche/a ydelenesse withstonde

And though men dredden neuer for to dye
Yet se men wel by reson doutles
That ydelnesse is rote of slogardye
Of which there cometh neuer no good ensens
And sithens that slouthe holdeth hem in a lees
Only to slepe/and for to eate and drinke
And to deuouren al that other swynke

And for to put vs from suche ydelnesse
That cause is of so great confusyon

Here

The seconde nonnes prologue.

I haue here done my faythful besynesse
After the legende in translacion
Right of thy glorious lyfe and passion
Thou wt thy garlode/wrought wt rose & lely
The mene I/mayde and marter seynt Cecily

¶ And thou that arte floure of virgins all
Of whom that Bernarde lyst so wel to write
To the at my begynnyng first I call
Thou comforte of vs wretches/ do me endyte
Thy maydes deth/ ꝑ wan thorow her merite
The eternal lyfe/ and of the fende victorie
As men may after rede in her storie

Thou mayde & mother/doughter of thy sone
Thou well of mercy/synful soules cure
In whom that god of bounte chese for to wone
Thou humble and hye ouer euery creature
Thou noblest/so farre ouer nature
That no disdayne the maker had of synde
His sone in bloode & flesshe to clothe & wynde

Whiche in the cloystre of thy blisful sydes
Took mannes shappe/ the eterne loue & pees
That of the true compas/lorde & gyde is
Whom heuen/erthe/ and see/withouten les
Aye heryen/and thou virgyne wemles
Bare of thy body/ & dweldest mayden pure
The creatour of euery creature

Assembled is in the magnificence
With mercy/goodnesse/and with suche ppte
That thou arte the sonne of excellence
Not onely that helpest hem that prayen the
But often tyme of thy benignyte
Full frely/ or that men thyn helpe beseche
Thou goest before/ and arte her lyues leche

Now helpe thou blisful/ & mcke fayre mayde
Me flemed wretche/in this deserte of gall
Thinke on the woman of Canane/that sayd
That whelpes eaten some of ꝑ crõmes small
That from her lordes table ben ifall
And though ꝑ I vnworthy doughter of Eue
Be synful/pet accepteth my beleue

And for that fayth is dede withouten werkis
So for to werche/yeue me wytte and space
That I be quyt from ꝑ place ꝑ most derke is
O thou that arte so fayre and ful of grace
Be myn aduocate in that hye place
There as without ende us songe Osanna
Thou Cristes mother/ & doughter of Anna

And of thy light/my soule in prison lyggyst
That troubled is by the contagyon
Of my body/ and also by the wyght
Of erthly lustr/and also false affection
O hauen/ O refute/ O saluacion
Of hem that ben in sorowe and distresse
Nowe helpe/for to my werke I wol me dresse

¶ yet I pray you that reden that I write
Forgeueth me/that I do no dyligence
This ilke storie subtelly to endyte
For bothe haue I the wordes & the sentence
Of him that at the sayntes reuerence
The storie wrote/and folowen her legende
And pray you that ye wol my werke amende

¶ First wol I you the name of seynt Cecily
Expowne/as men may in her storie se
It is to saye in englisshe/heuens lyly
For pure chastnesse of virgynite
Or for she wytnesse had of honeste
And grene of conscience/and of good fame
The sote sauoure lyke was her name

Or Cecily is to say/ the way to blynde
For she ensample was by good techyng
Or elles Cecily/as I wotten fynde
Is ioyned by a maner coniopnyng
Of heuen and Lya/ in her syguring
The hyest is set for thought of holynesse
And lya/for her lastyng besynesse

Cecily may eke be sayd in this manere
Wantyng of blyndnesse/for her great lyght
Of sapience/ and for her thewes clere
Or elles Lo/ this maydens name bught
Of heuen & Leos cometh/ of wisdõe by right
Men might the heuen of people her call
Ensample of good and vyse werkes all

For Leos people/ in Englisshe is to say
And right as men may in the heuen se

The

The sonne/and moone/& sterres euery way
Right so many goostly/in that mayden fre
Bathen of faythe/the great magnyficence
And eke the clerenesse hoole of sapience
And soundnesse wrthe/bright of eyesight

And right so as these philosophres write
That speche is slyppe/rounde/& eke slidyng

Right so was fayre Cecily the mayde
Ful stuffe and besy in euery good werkyng
And rounde and hoole in good perseuerynge
And stedfastyng euer in charyte ful bright
Now haue I declared you what she hyght.

Here endeth the seconde nonnes prologue/and begynneth her tale.

This mayde bright Cecile/as her lyfe sayth
Was comyn of Romayns/& of noble kynde
And so vnthe forthed vp in the fayth
Of Christ/& bare his gospel in her mynde
Ne neuer cessed/as I wryte fynde
Of her prayere/and god to loue and drede
Besechyng hym to kepe her maydenhede

And whan this mayde shulde vnto a man
Wedded be/that was ful yonge of age
Whiche that perced was Valerian
And daye was comyn of her mariage
She ful demure and humble in her corage
Vnder her robe of golde/y^ sate ful fayre
Had nere her flesshe yclad her in an heyre

And whyles that the organs made melodye
To god alone thus in herte songe she

O laude/my soule and eke my body gye
Vnwemmed/lest I confounded be
And for his loue that dyed vpon a tre
Euery seconde or thirde day she faste
Ape vpodyng in her orisons ful faste.

The night cam/& to bedde must she gone
With her husbonde/as ofte is the manere
And prively she sayd vnto him anon
O swete and wel byloued spouse dere
There is a counsayle/and ye wol it here
Whiche that right fayne I wold in you fayne
So that ye me ensure/it not to bewrayne.

Valerian gan faste vnto her swere
That for no cas/ne thyng that myght be
He shulde neuer to none bewrayen her
And thus at erste/thus to him sayd she

I haue

I haue an angell/ whiche that loueth me
That wt̄ grete loue/ where so I wake or slepe
Is redy aye/ my body for to kepe

And if that he may felen out of drede
That ye me touche or loue in vylonye
He right anon wyl slee you with the dede
And in your youthe thus shall ye dye
And if that ye in clene loue me gye
He wol you loue as me/ for your clennesse
And shewe you of his ioye and brightnesse.

¶ This Valeryan/ corrected as god wolde
Answerde ayen/ if I shal trust the
Let me that aungell se/ and him beholde
And if that it a very aungell be
Than wol I done as thou haste prayde me
And if thou loue another man forsothe
Right wt̄ this swerde thā wol I sle you bothe

¶ Cecyle answerde anon in this wyse
If that ye lyste/ that angell shul ye se
So that ye trowe on Christ and you baptyse
Goth forthe to Via apia (qd̄ she)
That from this towne ne stant but myles thre
And to the poore folke that there dwell
Say hem right thus/ as I shal you tell

Tel hem that I Cecyle/ you to hem sende
To shewen you the good Vrban the olde
For secret nedes/ and for good entent
And whan that ye Vrban han beholde
Tel him the wordes/ that I to you tolde
And whan that he hath purged you fro synne
Than shal ye se that aungel er ye twynne.

¶ Valeryan is to that place ygon
And right as him was taught by his lernyng
He founde this holy Vrban anon
Amonge thilke sayntes buryals lurkyng
And he anon/ without tarying
Dyd his message/ and whan he had it tolde
Vrban for ioy/ gan his handes vp holde

The teres from his eyen let he fall
Almighty god/ O Jesu christ (qd̄ he)
Sower of chaste counsayle/ herde of us all
The fruite of thilke sede of chastyte
That thou haste sowe in Cecile/ take to the
Lo lyke a besy bee/ without gyle
The serueth aye thyn owne thrall Cecile

For thilke spouse/ that she to se but newe
Ful lyke a fierce lyon/ she sendeth here
As meke as any lambe way to me
And with that worde/ anon there gan apere
An olde man/ cladde in whyte clothes clere
That had a boke with letters of golde in hōde
And gan byforne Valeryan for to stonde.

¶ Valeryan as deed fel downe for drede
Whan he this olde man sawe standyng so
Whiche forth with anon he herde him rede
O lorde/ O faythe/ O god withouten mo
Of christendom/ and father of al also
Aboven al/ and ouer al euery where
These wordes al with golde written were

Whan this was radde/ thā sayd this olde man
Leuest thou this thyng or none/ say ye or nay
I leue al this thyng (qd̄ Valeryan)
Vnder the heuen no wight ne thynke may
Bother thyng than this/ I dare wel say
Tho vanyssshed the olde man/ he nyst what
And pope Vrban him christened right there.

¶ Valeryan gothe home/ & fyndeth Cecile
Within his chambre/ with an aungel stonde
This aungel had of rose and of lylye
Crownes two/ the whiche he bare in honde
And first to Cecyle/ as I vnderstonde
He yaue that one/ and after gan he take
That other to Valeryan her make

With body clene/ & with vnwemmed thought
Kepeth aye wel these crownes (qd̄ he)
From paradyse to you I haue hem brought
Ne neuer more shullen they rotten be
Ne lese her swete fauour/ trusteth me
Ne neuer wight shal sene hem with eye
But he be chaste/ and hate vilonye

And thou Valeryan/ for thou so sone
Assentedest to good counsayle also
Sey what yt̄ lyst/ & thou shalt sone thy bone
I haue a brother (qd̄ Valeryan tho)

The

That in this worlde I loue no may so
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To knowe the trouthe/as I do in this place.

The angel answerd/god sheweth your requeste
And bothe with the palme of martirdome
Shal ye come vnto the blissfull feest
And with ꝓ worde Tyburce his brother come
And whan that he the fauoure vnderstonde
Wherfore that the roses and the lylyes caste
Within his herte he gan to wonder faste

And sayde: I wonder this tyme of the yere
Whence that this sote fauoure cometh so
Of roses and lylies/that I smell here
For though I had hem in myn houdes two
The fauour myght in me no deper go
The swete smel/ that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde.

Valerian sayd/two crownes haue we
Now we white ꝛ rose red/that shyneth clere
Which that thyn eyen han no might to se
And as thou smellest hem through my prayere
So shalt thou seen hem my trewe brother dere
If it so be that thou wylte without slouthe
Leeue a right/and knowe the very trouthe

Tyburce answerde/ sayest thou this to me
In sothnesse/ or in dreme herken I this?
In dremes (qd Valerian) han we be
Vnto this tyme/brother myn dere
But now we at erst/ our dwelling in trouth is
Now wost thou (qd Tyburce) ꝛ in what wise
Quod Valerian/that I shal the deuyse.

The angel of god hath me ꝓ trouth itaught
Which thou shalt seen/ ꝛ thou wylte renoy
The ydols/ and be clene/and elles naught
And of the miracles of these crownes tweye
Wyrt Almache in his prefate laste to fey
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it/and sayth in this manere.

The palme of martirdom for to atteyne
Wyrt Lecyle/ful fylled of goddes peste
The worde ꝛ ende her chamaile gan she weyne
Vnto Tyburce/and Lecyles seyde

To whiche god of his bounte wolde shyfte
Crownes two/of flowres wel smellyng
And made the angel hem the crownes bring

The mayde hath brought hem to blisse aboue
The mayde hath wist what it is worth certayn
Deuocion and chastyte wel for to loue
Who shewed hem Cecile al open and playne
That al ydoles ben but thynges in vayne
For they ben dombe/ ꝛ therto they ben defe
And charged him his ydoles for to lefe

Who that trowth not this/a beest he is
(qd this Tyburce) if that I shal not lye
She kyssed his brest whan she herde this
And was ful glad he couthe trouth espye
This day take I the for myn allye
Sayd this blissful mayden fayre and clere
For after that she sayd as ye may here.

Lo right so as the loue of Christ (qd she)
Made me thy brothers wyfe/right in ꝓ wyse
Anoon for myn alye here take I the
Sythens that thou woste thyn ydoles dispyse
Go with thy brother now/ ꝛ the baptyse
And make the clene/so ꝓ thou mayst beholde
The angels face/of whiche thy brother tolde.

Tiburce answerde/and said: brother dere
First tel me whyther I shal/ ꝛ to what man
To whom he sayd/come forth wt good chere
I wol the lede vnto the pope Vrban
To Vrban brother myn Valerian
(qd this Tiburce) wylt thou me thyder lede?
Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede

Ne meneste thou not Vrban (qd he tho)
That is so ofte dampned to be deed
And wonneth in halles to and fro
And dare not ones put forthe his heed
They shulde him brenne in a fyre so reed
If he were foude/and martyred myght him spye
And we also/that here syn companye

And whyles we seken thilke diuinite
That is yhidde in heuen pryuely
Algate yburnt in this worlde shulde we be
To whom Cecile answerde boldely

Hey might drede wel and sykfully
This lyfe to lese/ myn owne dere brother
If this were lyuing only and non other

But there is better liuyng in other place
That neuer shal be lost/ ne drede the nought
Which goddes sone vs told through his grace
That fathers sonne hath al thing wrought
And al ꝑ wrought is with a sykful thought
The goste that from the father gan procede
Hath souled hym without any drede

By worde and by myracle/ lo goddes sonne
Whan he was in this worlde/ declared here
That there is other lyfe there men may wõne
To whom answerde Tiburce: O iustet dere
Ne saydest thou right nowe in this manere
There nas but one god lorde in sothfastnesse
And now of thre how may thou bere witnesse

That shal I tel (qõ she) or that I go
Right as a man hath sapyences thre
Memorye/ engyne/ and intellecte also
So in suche beyng of diuinite
Thre persons may there right wel be
Tho gan she there ful besily hym preche
Of Ihusies sonne/ and of his paynes teche

And many poynte of his passyon
How goddes sone l this world was witholde
To do mankynde playne remissyon
That was bounde in synnes & cares colde
Al these thynges she vnto Tiburce tolde
And after this Tiburce in good entent
With Valeryan to pope Vrban went

That thonked god/ & with glad hert & lyght
He chrystned hym/ and made hym in that place
Perfyte in his lernyng goddes knyght
And after this Tiburce gate suche grace
That euery day he sawe in tyme and space
The aungel of god/ and euery maner boone
That he god asked/ it was sped ful soone

It were ful harde by order for to sayne
How many wonders Ihesu for hym wrought
But at the laste/ to tel shorte and playne
The sergeaunt of the town hem sought

And hem byfore Almache the preuost brought
Whiche hem apposed/ & knewe al her entent
And to the ymage of Jupiter hem sente

And sayd/ who so wol do no sacrifyce
Swappe of his heed/ this is my sentence here
Anon these martyrs/ that I you deuyse
One Maximus that was an officere
Of the prefectes/ and his conseillere
Hem hent/ & whan he forth the sayntes ladde
Him selfe he wept for pyte that he had

Whan Maximus had herde this sayntes lore
He gate hem of the turmentours leue
And had hem to his house without eny more
And with her preching/ er that it were eue
They gonne from the turmentour reue
And from Maximus/ & from his folke erthon
The false sayth/ to trowen in god alone

Cecile came/ whan it was wopen nyght
With prestes/ that hem chrystened al in fere
And afterward/ whan day was wopen light
Cecile hem sayd with a sober chere
Nowe Ihusies owne knightes leue & dere
Casteth al away the werkes of derknesse
And armeth you in armoure of brightnesse

ye han for sothe ydone a great batayle (ord
your cours is don/ your sayth hath you saued
Gothe to the crowne of lyfe ꝑ may not fayle
The rightful iuge/ whiche ye han serued
Shal yeue it you as ye it deserued
And whan this thing was sayd/ as I deuyse
They sadde hem forth to done the sacrifyse

But whan they were vnto the place ycome
To tel shortly the conclusyon
They nolde encense ne sacrifyce right nought
But on her knees they satte hem adown
With humble herte and sobre deuocion
And losten bothe her heedes in the place
Her soules went to the ioye of grace.

This Maximus/ ꝑ sawe this thing betyde
With pytouse teres tolde it anon right
That he her soules sawe to heuen glyde
With aungels ful of clernesse and of lyght

And

And with his worde conuerted many a wyght
For whiche Almachius dyd hym so to bite
With whyppes of leede/tyl he his life gan lete

Leeste him tobe/and buryed him amone
Ey Tyburce and Valerian sothly
Within her buryeng place vnder a stone
And after this Almachius hastely
Bad his mynysters fetchen openly
Cecily/ so that she myght in his presence
Do sacrifyce/and Jupyter essence

But they conuerted al her wyse sone
Repten ful sone/and gaue ful credence
Vnto her worde/ and cryden more and more
Cryst goddes sonne/without difference
Is very god/this is all our sentence
That hath a seruaunt so good hym to serue
Thus with voice we trowe we thoughe we sterue

Almachius/that herde al this doyng
Bad fetche Cecily/ that he might her se
And alderfirst thus was she asayng
What maner woman arte thou (qd he:)
I am a gentylwoman borne (quod she)
I aske of the (quod he) thoughe it the greue
Of thy religion and of thy byleue?

Ye sholde bygan your questions folisshly
(Qd she) that wolde two answers conclude
In one demaunde/ ye asken lewdly
Almachius answerde to that symylitude
Of whome comyth they answere so rude
Of myne (qd she) whom I the wote fro yonde
Of vnderstonde/ and of good feyth bycreynde.

Almachius sayd/ vsurpest thou vnto the
Of my power: and she hym answerde thus
Your myght (qd she) dar I wel be bolde
For every mortal mannes power nys
But lyke a bladder ful of wynde ypus
For why a mortal power/ lyghtly is ylost
Ley with a nedles poynte/ whan it is prikked most

Ful wrongfully begynnest thou (qd he)
And yet to manage in thy pernicyouse
Wylt thou not soone our mighty princes se
Nere thou commaunded y make sacrifyse?

That every christen wight shal haue penaunce
But if that he his crystendome withsey
And goy al quite/if he wol it renoy.

Youre princes erren/as youre nobles dothe
Quod tho Cecile/in a wode sentence
Ye make vs gilty/and it is not sothe
For ye that know wel our innocence
For as moche as we done a reuerence
To Cryste/and for we bere a cristen name
Ye put on vs a crymne and eke a blame

But we that know wel thilke name so
For vertuous/we may it not withsey.
Almachius answerd/ chese one of these two
Do sacrifyce/or cristendom renoy
That thou mowe scapen by that wey
At whiche worde the holy blisful mayde
Gan for to laughe/I to the nuge she sayde.

O nygge confused in thy spreete
Wolde thou that I renye innocence
To make me a wycked wight (qd she)
Lo he dissymuleth here in audience
He starreth and wodeth in his aduertence
To whom Almachius sayd: O sely wretche
Thou wost not how far my myzt may stretche

Hath not our mighty princes peuen
To me/both power and eke auctorite
To make folke to dyen or to lyuen?
Why spekest thou so proudly than to me?
I ne spake it not but stedfastly (qd she)
Not proudly/ for I say as for my spede
I hate deedly thilke vyce of pride

And if thou herde not a sothe for to here
Than wol I shewen al openly by right
That thou hast made a ful great lesyng here
Thou sayst thy princes han yeue the myght
Both to slee and eke to quycke a wight
Thou ne maryest but only vyce wyeue
Thou hast non other power ne leue

But thou mayst say/ thy power han ymaked
Ofyuste of bothe/ for if thou spake of me
Thou lyest/ for thy power is ful naked
Do way thy boldnesse/ sayd Almachius tho.

And do sacrifyce to our goddes er thou go
I recke not what wronge thou me profer
For I can suffre/as can a philosopher

But thilke wronges may I not endure
That thou spekest of our goddes here (qꝺ he)
Cecile answerde/ O wyte creature
Thou saydest no worde sythens yͤ spakest to
That I ne knewe therwith thy nyce (me
And that thou were in every maner wyse
A leude officer/and a vayne justyce

The lacketh nothyng to thyn bitter eyen
That thou nart blynd/ for thing ꝯ we seen al
That is a stone/that men wel may aspyen
That ilke stone/a god thou wolte it call
I rede the let thyn honde upon it fall
And taste it wel/ a stone thou shalte it fynde
Save that thou seest not wt thyn eyen blynde

It is a shame that the people shall
So scorne the/and laugh at thy folye
For comenly men wotte it wel ouer all
That mighty god is in his heuens hye
And these ymages/wel mayste thou aspye
To the ne to hem selfe may they not profyte
For in her effecte/they be not worthe a myte

Thus and suche other wordes sayd she
And he woxe wrothe/a bad she shulde be lede
Home to her house/and in her house (qꝺ he)
Enclose her in a bathe/with flames rede
And as he bade/ right so was done the dede
For in a bathe they gan her faste shetyn
And night a day great fyre under they betyn

Al the longe night/and ek the day also
For al the fyre/and ek the bathes hete
She sate al colde/and felte of it no wo
It made her not a droppe for to swete
But in that bathe her lyfe she mote lete
For Almachie/with a ful wicked entent
To sleen her in the bathe/ his sonde sente

Thre strokes in the necke he smote her tho
The tormentour/but for no maner chaunce
He might not smyte al her necke a two
And for there was that tyme an ordynaunce
That no man shuld do no person such penaunce
The fourth stroke to smyte/for ferde or fere
This tormentour durste smyte no more

But halfe dead/with her necke prouen there
He lefte her lye/ and on his way he went
The christen folke that about her were
With sheetes homle ful fayre her hente
Thre dayes lyued she in this turmente
And never ceased she the faythe to teche
That she had fostred hem/she gan to preche

And hem she gaue her moeables & her thyng
And to the pope Vrban bytoke hem tho
And sayd/ I asked this of the heuen kyng
To have respyte thre dayes and no mo
To recommaunde to you/er that I go
These soules/and that I might so werche
Here of myn house perpetuelyche a cherche

Saynt Vrban/with his deknes prively
The body fette/and buryed it by night
Amonge his other sayntes honestly
Her house the churche of saynt Cecile hyght
Saynte Vrban halowed it/as he wel myght
In whiche vnto this day/in noble wyse
Men doy to Chryst & to his sayntes servyce.

Here endeth the seconde nonnes tale/ and here begynneth the prologue of the chanons yoman.

Whan ended was the lyfe of saynt Cecyle
Er we fully had rydden fyue myle
At Bongiton vnder the blee/we gan atake
A man/that clothed was in clothes blake
And vnder that he had a whyte surplyse
His habeney/that was al pomely gryse
So swette/that it wonder was to se
It semed that he had pryked myles thre
The horse eke that his yoman rode upon
So swette/that vnneth might he gon
Aboute the parfyt[illegible] flode the foome ful hye
He was of foome as flekked as a pye
A male twyfolde on his croper lay
It semed that he carryed lytel aray
Al lyght for somer rode this worthy man
And in my herte wondren I began
What that he was/ tyll I vnderstode

Sodenly

What that he was/ nyll that I bitrayse
Some that his clothe was selwe to be sode
For which/ whan I first longe aryssh me
I demyd him some chanon for to be
His hatte hynge at his backe by a lace
For he had ryden more than trot or pace
He rode ayre pursyng as he were wode
A clote lefe he had layde vnder his hode
For swette/ and for to kepe him from sete
But it was ioye for to se him swete
His forhed droppede/ as a stylatorie
Were full of plantayne or of pesonye
And whan he was come/ he gan crye
God saue (quod he) this holy compayne
Fayre dame I preche (qð he) for youre sake
Because that I wolde you ouertake
To ryden in this mery compayne.
Thus yeman was ese ful of curtesye
And sayd sythe/ now we in the more ryde
Out of youre hosterye I saue you tryde
And warned here my lorde and somerayne
Whiche that to ryden with you is ful fayne
For his disporte/ he loueth daliaunce.
Freke for thy warnig god yeue ȳ good thãke
Than sayd our host/ certaynly it wolde seme
Thy lorde were wyse/ & so I may wel deme
He is ful iocunde also dare I lay
Can he ought tell a mery tale or tway
With whiche he glade may this compayne.
Who sir my lorde? ye without lye
He can of mythe and ese of iolyte
Not but ynough also for trusteth me
And ye him knewe also wel as do I
Ye wolde wonder howe wel and thusticly
He couthe werke/ and that in sondrie wyse
He hath taken on him many a great emprise
Which were full harde/ for any that is here
To bring about/ but they of him it lere
As homely as he ryden amonge you
If ye him knewe/ it wold be for youre prowe
Ye wolde not forgon his aquayntaunce
For muche good I dare lay my daunce
And that I fame in my possession
He is a man of hye discrecion
I warne you wel he is a passing wyse man.
Wel (qð our host) I pray the tel me than
Is he a clerke or nay? tel what he is.
A clerke/ nay he is gretter than a clerke ihere
Sayd the yeman/ and in wordes fewe
Hoste of his craft somwhat wol I shewe
I say my lorde can swiche a subtelte
But of his craft ye may not wete of me
And somwhat helpe I yet to his worchyng
That of the grounde that we be on ryding
Ere we come to Canterbury towne
He couthe all clene turne vp and downe
And pave it al of syluer and of golde.
And whan this yeman had thus ytolde
Vnto our hoste: he sayd benedicite
This thyng is wonder merveylous to me
Seme that thy lorde is of so hye prudence
(Because of which/ men shulde him reuerence)
That of his worshyp recketh he so lyte
His ouerest sloppe is not worthe a myte
As in effecte to him/ so mote I go
It is al bawdy and to tore also
Why is thy lorde so slouthfule? I the pray
And is of power better clothes to bey?
If that his dede acorde with thy speche
Tel me that/ and that I the beseche.
Why (qð this yeman) wherto aske ye me?
God helpe me so/ for he shal neuer thee
But I wol not auowe that I saye
And therfore kepe it secret I you praye
He is to wyse in fay/ as I beleue
That is ouerdone nyl not preue
And right as clarkes sayne/ it is a vyce
Wherfore I holde him in that/ leude & nyce
For whan a man hath ouer great a wytte
Ful ofte it happeth him to mysusen it
So dothe my lorde/ and that me greueth sore
God amende it/ I can say you no more.
Therof no force good yeman (qð our host)
Seme of the counyng of thy lorde thou wost
Tel howe he dothe/ I pray the heuenly
Seme that he is so crafty and so sly
Where dwelleth he/ if it to tell be?
In the suburbes of a towne (qð he)
Lurkyng in hernes and in lanes blynde
Where these robbers/ and theues by kynde
Holden her privy fearful residence
As they that dare not shewen her presence
So fare we/ if that I shal say the sothe.
Yet (qð our hoste) let me talke tothe
Why artow thus so bismotered in thy face?
Peter (qð he) god yeue it harde grace

Dam. Iam

The prologue of the chanons yeman.

I am so vsed in the hotte fyre to blowe
That it hath chaunged my colour as I trowe
I am not wonte in no myrrour to pre
But swynke sore/ and lerne to multiplye
We blondren euer/ and pouren in the fyre
And for al that/ we faylen of our desyre
For euer we lacken our conclusyon
To moche folke we do illusyon
And borowe we golde/ be it a pounde or two
Or ten or twelue/ or many sommes mo
And make hem wene at the leste way
That of a pounde we coulde make tway
Yet is it falle/ and ape han we good hope
It for to done/ and after it we grope
But that science is so ferre vs byforne
We mowe not/ al though we had it swore
It ouertake/ it flytte away so faste
It wol vs make beggers at the laste.

¶ Whiles this yeman was thus his tale tolde
This chanon drewe hym nere/ & herde al tolde
Which this yeman spake/ for suspection
Of mennes speche euer had this chanon
For Lato sayth/ he that gilty is
Demeth al thyng be spoke of hym iwys
By reason of that/ he gan so nyghe to drawe
To his yeman/ to herken al his sawe
And thus he sayd vnto his yeman tho
Holde nowe thy peace/ & spek no worder mo
For if thou do/ thou shalte it sore abye
Thou slaundrest me here in this compayne
And eke discoueryst that thou shuldest fayne.
Eye (qd our host) tel on what so euer betyde
Of al his thretyng/ recke me not a myte.
¶ By fayth (qd he) no more do I but fyte
And whan this chanon sawe it wolde not be
But his yeman wolde tel his pleynte
He sprange away for very sorowe and shame.
¶ A (qd the yeman) here shal ryse a game
At that I can/ anon wol I you tell
Sens he is gon/ the foule fende hym quell
For neuer here after wol I with hym mete
For peny ne for pounde/ I you byhete
He that me brought first vnto that game
Er that he dye/ sorowe haue he and shame
For it is cruel to me by my fayth
That sele I wel/ what so any man sayth
And yet for al my sweate and al my greue
For al my sorowe/ labour and mischeue
I couthe neuer leaue it by no wyse
Nowe wolde god my wytte might suffyse
To tellen al that longeth to that arte
But natheles/ yet wol I tell you a parte
Sens that my lorde is gon/ I wol not spare
Suche thyng as I know I wol declare.

¶ Here endeth the prologue of the chanons yeman/ and here folowyth his tale.

¶ In this chanon I dwelle seuen yere
And of his science am I lewed the nere
Al that I had/I haue lost therby
And god wotte/so hath many mo than I
There I was wonte to be right fresshe & gay
Of clothyng/and eke of other good aray
Lowe may I weare an hose vpon myn hed
And wher my colours was bolde fresshe & red
Lowe it is wanne/and of a leden hewe
Who so it seeth/sore shal him rewe
And of my swynke/yet blered is myn eye
To wherthe auauntage it is to wynkē the
That slydyng science hath me made so bare
That I haue no good/where that euer I fare
And yet I am endetted so therby
Of golde/that I haue borowed trewly
That whyle I lyue/I shal it quyte neuer
Let euery man beware by me euer
What maner man that casteth him therto
If he continue/I holde his thryfte ydo
So helpe me god/therby shal he neuer wyn
But empte his purse/& make his wyttes thyn
And whan he/therto wel his madnesse & folye
Hath lost his owne good/through ieopardye
Than he entiteth other men therto
To lese her good/as him selfe hath do
For vnto shrewes/iop. it is and ese
To haue her felawes in payne and disese
For thus was I ones serued of a clerke
Of that no charge/I wol speke of our werke
¶ Whan we be there/as we shal exercyse
Our clouysshe crafte/we semen wonder wyse
Our termes bin so clergiall and so quaynte
I trowe the fyre/tyl myn herte faynte.
¶ What should I tel eche proporcion
Of thynges/whiche we werchen vpon
As oyle of tyle or sope boylers/may wel be
Of syluer/or of some other quantyte
Ne how we to tellen yon the names
Of orpyment/brent bones/pyon squames
That into poudre grounden bin ful small
And in an erthen potte/how we put is all
And faste yput in/and also papere
Vpfone these poudres that I spoke of here
And wel ypoured/with a lampe of glas
And of muche other thyng that there was
And of the potte and glas englutyng
That of the eyre myght passe out no thyng
And of the fyr fyre and smarte also
Whiche that was made/and of the care & wo
That we had in our matters fusshyng
And in amalgamyng/and rasyng
Of quyksyluer/infecte thertarye crude
For al our sleyghte/we conne not conclude
Our orpyment/ and sublimed therwy
Our grounde litarge eke on the porphyre
Of eche of these/ bueth certayne
Not helpeth vs/ our labour is in vayne
Ne eke our spyrites assencioun
Ne yet our waters/ that sten al fyre adoun
Who we in our werkyng nothing auayle
For losse of al our labour & our trauayle
And al the coste/a twenty dyuel way
Is losse also/whiche we vpon it lay.
¶ There is also ful many a nother thyng
That is to our craft apertaynyng
Though I by order hem ne reherse can
Because that I am a lewde man
Yet wol I telle hem/ as they come to mynde
Though I ne can sette hem in her kynde
As bole armonyake/verdegrese/boras
And sondry vessels made of erthe and glas
Our vrinals/ and our descensoures
Vpoke/ crosselettes/and sublimatoires
Cucurbytes/and alembykes eke
And other suche/dere ynough a leke
It needeth not to reherse hem al
Waters rubyfying/and boles gall
Arsenike/ sal armonyake/and brimstone
And herbes coulde I tel eke many one
As Egrimonye/valeryan/ and lunarye
And other suche/if that me lyste to tarye
Our lampes brennyng bothe nyght and day
To bringen about our craft/if that we may
Our fourneys eke of calcinacion
And of waters albificacion
Vnslekked lyme/chalke/and glayre of an eye
Poudres dyuers/asshes/donge/pysse/& clay
Hered poudres/sal petre/and vitriole
And dyuers fyres/made of wodde and cole
Sal tartre/alkaly/and sal preparate
And corosyues/and coagulate
Clay made with hors hayre/mans hayre/& oyle
Of tartre alym/glas/berme/woute/& argoile
Reasalgar/and other waters rubyfying
And eke of our matters enterpoling

And

And of our syluer citrynacion
Our sementyng/ and eke fermentacion
Our Ingottes testes / and many mo
I wol you tel as was me taught also
The fourte spyrites/and the bodyes seuen
By order/as ofte I herde my lorde nemene.
¶ The first spyrite quycke syluer cleped is
The seconde orpyment/the thirde ipus
Sal armoniake/ the fourthe brimstone
¶ The bodyes seuen eke/lo here hem anone
Sol golde is/and Luna syluer we threpe
Mars yron/Mercurye quycke syluer we clepe
Saturnus lerde/and Jupiter is tynne
And Venus coper/by my father kynne.
¶ This cursed crafte/who so wol exercyse
He shal no good haue that may him suffyse
For al the good he spendeth theraboute
He lese shal/ therof haue I no doute
Who so that lysten to vttter his folye
Let him come forthe & lerne to multiplye
And euery man that hath aught in his cofer
Let him apere/and werke a philosopher
Ascaunce that crafte is so light for to lere
Nay nay god wot/al be he monke or frere
Preest or chanon/or any other wight
Though he sytte at his boke both day & night
In lernyng of this clyuysshe wyte lore
Al is in vayne/and parde moche more
For to lere a leude man this subtelte
Fye speke not therof/it wol not be
Al couthe he lettrure/or couthe he none
As in effecte/he shal fynde it al one
For bothe two/by my saluacion
Concludeth in multiplycacion
Alyche wel/ whan they haue al ydo
This is to sayne/they sayden bothe two.
¶ yet forgate I moche rehersayle
Of waters corosyfe/and of fumeyte
And of bodyes mollifycacion
And also of her induracion
Oyles/ calcinynge/ metall fusyble
To tellyng you al/ youlde passe ony bytle
That o where is/wherfore and for the beste
Of al these names nowe wol I reste
For as I trowe/ I haue you told ynough
To reyse a fende/al lothe be newer so tough.
¶ Nay lat be the philosophers stone
Alyxer cleped / we fellen fayle ofte at one
For had we hem/ thanne were we syker ynowe
But vnto god of heuen I make auowe
For al our crafte/whan that we han al ydo
And al our sleyght/ he wol not come vs to
He hath made vs spende moche goode
For sorow of which/ almost we waxen wode
But that good hope crepeth in our herte
Supposyng euer/ though we sore smerte
To ben releued by him afterwarde
Supposyng and hope is sharpe and harde
I warne you wel it is to lyken euer
That future temps hath made men diseuer
In trust therof/al that euer they had
yet of that arte/they couthe not waxe sad
For vnto hym it is a bytter swete
So semeth it/ for nere had they but a shete
Whiche þ they might wrappen hem in aught
And a hatte to walken in a dayesyght
They wolden hem sel/& spende it on this craft
They conne not stynte/tyl no thyng be laft
And euer more/where that euer they gon
Men may hem ken by smell of brimstone
For al the worlde they stynken as a gote
Her fauour is so rammyssh/ and so hote
That though a man a myle from hem be
The fauour wol enfecte him trusteth me
Lo/ thus by smellyng/ & by thende hare arey
Ye that men lyst/this folke knowe they may
And if a man wol ask hem prively
Why they be clothed so vnthriftily
Right anon they wol rownen in his ere
And sayne/if that they espyed were
Men wolde hem slee/by cause of her science
Lo thus these folke betrayen innocence
Passe ouer this/I go my tale vnto.
¶ Let clerkes pose be on the fyre ydo
Of metallike/ lyuth a certayne quantyte
Hy lorde hem trowe it is no maye but so
Lo wel he is gone/I dare say boldely
For ere he went/ he coude bore a hole
Alyche/I wolde wel ye hadde seene a role
And yet fel ofte he resorted in the house
And wolde ye hastye/ fel ofte at bordes so
The poore wydowes/and forwot of no go
These metallike ben of so great lordshyp
Our wittes may not make hem resty/nor
But if they were wrought of tyme and stonde
They pouren so/it throughe the wall they gonde
And some of hem synken in to the grounde
Thus haue we lost by tymes many a pounde

And some are scattered all the flooze aboute
Some lepen into the rose withouten doute
Tho ꝑ the sende not in our syght hun shewe
I trowe that he with vs be/that ilke shrewe
In hell where that he is lorde and syre
Ne is there no more wo/ne angre ne yre
Whan that our potte is broke/as I haue sayd
Euery man chese/ for holde him yuel apayde
Some sayd it was longe of the fyre makyng
Some sayd nay/it was ony the blowyng
Than was I ferde/for that was myn office
¶ Strawe (qd the tharde) ye ben lewde & vnwise
It was not tempred as it ought to be.
¶ Nay (qd the fourthe) stynte & herken me
Bycause our fyre was not made of bethe
That is the cause/and none other so thethe
I can not tell wherony it is alonge
But wel I wotte great stryfe is vs amonge.
What (qd my lord) ther nys no more to done
Of these percyles I wol beware efte sone
I am right sker/that the potte was crased
Be as be may/be ye not amased
As vsage is/let swepe the flooze as swythe
Plukke vp your herte/& be glad and blythe.
The multocke on an heape ysweped was
And on the flooze caste a canuas
And al this multocke in a syue ythowe
And syfted and ypyked many a throwe.
¶ Parde (qd one) som what of our mistall
Yet is there here/thoughe we haue not all
And tho this thyng mishapped hath as now
Another tyme it may ben wel ynowe
We mote put our good in auenture
A marchaunt parde may not ay endure
Trusten wel in his prosperite
Somtyme his good is drowned in the se
And somtyme it cometh safe vnto the londe
Pese (qd my lord) thy spech is vnderstonde
To fynde suche crafte al wo ay ouer ylyche
And but I do you chere my name is wyche
Here wote be fonde ay some what wel I wote
¶ Ey other sayd/the fyre wore euer hote
But be it hote or colde/I dare say this
That ye canonkes euer more a mys
Be sayling of that whyche ye wolde haue
And ay our maluestie euer more ye crane
And whan we be togyther euerychon
Euery man semeth as wyse as Salomon
But al thing/whyche that shyneth as ꝑ golde
I not golde/as I haue herde tolde
Ne euery appell that is fayre at eye
Nys not good/what so men clappe or crye.
¶ Right so it fareth amonge vs
He that semeth the wyfest by Jesus
Is moste foole/whan it cometh to the prefe
And he that semeth trewest is a thefe
That shal ye knowen that I from you wende
By that I of my tale haue made an ende.
¶ There was a chanon of religioun
Amonges vs/wolde enferte al a toun
Thoughe it as great were as Nynyue
Rome/Alysaundre/Troye/and other thre
His sleyght and his infynyte falsnesse
There couthe no man wryten as I gesse
Thoughe that he myght lyue a thousande yere
In al this worlde of falsnesse nys his pere
For in his termes he wol him so wynde
And speke his wordes in so sly a kynde
Whan he comen shal with any wight
That he wol make him dote anon right
But it a fende be as him selfe is
Ful many a man hath he begyled er this
And mo wol/if that he may lyue a whyle
And yet may ryden & gone ful many a myle
Him for to selle/and haue aquayntaunce
Not knowyng of his false gouernaunce
And if ye liste to gyue me audyence
I wol it tellen here in your presence.
¶ But worshypful chanons religyouse
Ne deme not that I sclaunder your house
Al thoughe my tale of a chanon be
Of euery ordre some shrewe is parde
And god forbyd that al a companye
Shulde rue a synguler mannes folye
To sclaunder you is not myn entente
But to restore that myssse is mente
This tale was not onely tolde for you
But eke for other mo/ye wot wel how
That amonge Cristes apostels twelue
There was no traytour but Judas hym selue
Than wote ye shulde not vnwreke your blame
More shame may to you by me/I say the same
Haue euery thing/if ye wel serchen me
If any Judas in your route be
Remeueth him betyme/I you rede
If shame or lesse may cause any drede

And

And be nothyng displesed I you pray
But in this case herkeneth what I say.

In London was a preest annuellere
That therin had dwelte many a yere
Whiche was so plesaunt and so servysable
Vnto the wyfe / where he was at table
That she wolde suffre hym nothyng to paye
For borde ne clothyng / went he neuer so gay
And spendyng syluer had he right ynowe
Therof no force / I woll procede as nowe
And tell forthe my tale of the chanon
That brought this preest to confusyon.
¶ This false chanon came vpon a daye
Vnto this preestes chambre / where he laye
Beseechyng hym to lene hym a certayn
Of golde / and he wolde quyte hym ayen
Lenyth me a marke (qd he) but dayes thre
And at my day I woll quyte it the
And if it so be / that thou fynde me false
Another daye hange me by the halse
This preest toke hym a marke / and that swith
And this chanon hym thanked ofte syth
And toke his leaue / and went forth his wey
And at thirde day brought his money
And to this preest he tolde this golde ayen
Whereof this preest was gladde and fayn
¶ Certes (qd he) nothyng anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble / two or three
Or what thyng were in my possessyon
Whan he so trewe is of condicion
That in no wise he breke wol his day
To suche a man I can neuer say nay.
What qd this chanon / shulde I be vntrewe
Nay / that were thyng fallen of newe
Trouthe is a thyng that I woll euer kepe
Vnto the day / in whiche I shal crepe
Into my graue / or elles god forbede
Beleueth this as syker as your crede
God thanke I / and in good tyme be it sayde
That there nas neuer man yet yuel apayde
For golde ne syluer that he to me lent
Ne neuer falsshede in myn herte I ment.
And sir (qd he) nowe of my priuete
Sens ye so goodlyche haue ben to me
And lythe to me so great gentilnesse
Somwhat to quyte with your kyndenesse
I wol you shewe / if ye wol it here
(I shal it shewe to you anon right here)
Howe I can werche in philosophye
Taketh good hede / ye shal it se with youre eye
That I wol done a maistrye or I go.
¶ Ye sir (qd the preest) and wel ye so
Marye therof I pray you hertely.
¶ At your comaundement sir truely
(Qd the chanon) and elles god forbede
Lo howe this theefe couthe his seruyce bede
Ful sothe it is that suche profered seruyse
Stynketh / as wytnesseth the olde wyse
And that ful sone I wol it preuye
In this chanon / roote of al treccherye
That euermore delyte hath and gladnesse
Suche sendely thoughtes in his herte enpresse
How chasties people he may to mischefe bryng
God kepe vs from his false dissymulyng.
¶ What wyst this preest wt whom he delt
Ne of his harme comyng nothyng he felte
O sely preest / O sely innocente
With coueityse anon thou shalte be blente
O graceles / full blynde is thy conceyte
Nothyng arte thou ware of his deceyte
Whiche that this foxe hath shapen to the
His wylye wrenches thou mayste not flee
Wherfore to go to the conclusyon
That referreth to thy confusyon
Vnhappy man / anon I wol me hye
To tell thyn vnwytte ne thy folye
And eke the falsnesse of that other wretche
As fer forthe as my conneyng wol strecche.
¶ This chanon was my lorde ye wolde wene
Syr hoste in faythe / and by the heuen quene
It was another chanon / and not he
That can an hundred folde more subtelte
He hath betrayed folke many a tyme
Of his falsnesse it doleth me to ryme
Euer whan I speke of his falsehed
For shame of him / my cheekes waxen red
Algates they begynney for to glowe
For redenesse haue I non / right wel I knowe
In my visage / for fumes dyuerse
Of metals / whiche ye haue herde me reherse
Consumed and wasted hath my rednesse
Nowe take hede of this chanons cursednesse.
Syr (qd he) to the preest / let your man goo
For quicksyluer / that we it had anoo
And let him bynge vnces two or three

And whan he cometh/ au fayre ſhall ye ſe
I wonder thyng/ whiche ye ſawe neuer er this
Sir (qd the preſt) it ſhal be done anon
He badde his ſeruaunt fetch him this thyng
And he al redy was at his byddyng
And went him forth/ and came anon ageyne
With thre quarters ſyluer/ ſhortly for to ſayne
And take theſe vnto the to the chanoun
And he hem layde wel and fayre adoun
And bede the ſeruaunt coles for to bring
That he anon might go to his werkyng.
¶ The coles right anon were ſet
And this chanon toke out a croſſelet
Of his boſome/ and ſhewed it to the preeſt
This inſtrument (qd he) whiche ye thou ſeeſt
Take in thy honde/ and put thy ſelfe therin
Of this quarter ſyluer an vnce and begyn
In the name of Chriſt to werke a philoſopher
There be ful few we/ whiche I wolde it profer
To ſhewe hem this maner of my ſcience
For here ſhal ye ſe by experience
That this quarter ſyluer I wil mortifye
Right in your ſyght anon withouten lye
And make it as good ſyluer and as fyne
As there is any in your purſe or myne
Or elſwhere/ and make it malleable
And elſ holde me falſe and vnſtable
Amonges folke euer to appere.
¶ I haue a poudre/ that coſte me dere
Shal make al good/ for it is cauſe of all
Thy conning/ whiche I you ſhewe ſhall
Doubteth your nay/ and let him be therout
And ſhette the doore/ whyles we ben aboute
Our priuetie/ that no man vs eſpye
Whyles that we werken in our philoſophye.
Al as he bade/ fulfylled was in dede
This ylle ſeruaunt anon out yede
And his maiſter ſhette the doore anon
And to her labour ſpedily they gon
This preeſt at this curſed chanons byddyng
Upon the fyre anon ſet this thyng
And blewe the fyre/ ſo beſped him ful faſte
And this chanon vnto this croſſelet caſte
A poudre/ I not whereof it was
Made/ either of chalke/ erthe/ or glaſſe
Or ſom what elſ/ was not worthe a flye
To blynde with this preeſt/ ſo badde him tye
These coles for to couchen al aboue
The croſſelet/ for in token that I the loue
(Quod this chanon) thyn handes two
Shal werche al thyng that here ſhal be do.
Grant merry (qd the preeſt) it was ful glad
And couched coles/ as the chanon bad
And whyle he buſy was/ this fendely wretche
This falſe chanon/ this foule fende him fetche
Out of his boſome toke a litel cole
In whiche ful ſubtilly was made an hole
And therin was put of ſyluer limayle
An vnce/ and ſtopped was without fayle
The hole with waxe/ to kepe the limayle in
And vnderſtandeth that this falſe gyn
Was not made there/ but it was made byfore
And other thinges that I ſhal you tel more
Herafter/ whiche that he with him brought
Er he came there/ to begyle him he thought
And ſo he did/ er they wente a twynne
Wel he had turned him/ couthe he not blynne
It dulleth me/ whan that I of him ſpeke
Of his falſehede/ ſayne wolde I me wreke
If I wyſte how/ but he is here and there
He is ſo variaunt/ he bydeth no where.
¶ But taketh hede ſyrs now for goddes ſone
He toke his cole/ of whiche I ſpake aboue
And in his honde he bare it prively
And whyles the preeſt couched buſily
The coles/ as I tolde you er this
This chanon ſayd/ frende ye done amys
This is not couched as it ought to be
But ſone I ſhal amende it (quod he)
Now let me medle therwith but a whyle
For of you haue I pyte by ſayne Gyle
Ye ben right hotte/ I ſe wel how ye ſwete
Haue here a clothe and wype away the wete
And whyle the preeſt him wyped hate
This chanon toke the cole/ I ſhewe his fate
And layde it aboven apon the mydwarde
Of the croſſelet/ and blewe wel afterwarde
Til that the coles gonne faſte brenne.
¶ Now yeue vs drinke/ qd this chanon then
As ſwythe al ſhal be wel I vndertake
Sytte we do wine/ and let vs merry make
And whan this chanons beechen cole
Was brent al/ the limayle out of the hole
Into the croſſelet anon fell adoun
And ſo it muſte needes by reſoun
Sens it ſo euen aboue couched was

But

But therof wyste the preest nothyng/ alas
He demed al the coles fyche goode
For of the sleyght/ nothing he vnderstode.
And whan this alchamistre sawe his tyme
Ryseth vp sir preest (qd̄ he) & stondeth by me
And for I wot wel yngot haue I none
Goth walketh forthe/ & bringe a chalke stone
For I wol make it of the same shappe
That an yngot is/ if I may haue happe
And bring eke with you a bolle or a panne
Ful of water/ and ye shal se thanne
Howe that our besynesse shal happe & preue
And yet for ye shal haue no mysbyleue
Ne wronge conceyte of me in your absence
I wol not ben out of your presence
But go with you/ & come with you agayne
The chambre dore/ shortly to sayne
They opened and shette/ & went forth her wey
And forthe with hem they carryed the key
And comen ayen withouten any delay
What shulde I tarye al the longe day
He toke the chalke/ and shope it in the wyse
Of an yngot/ as I shal you deuyse.
I saye he toke out of his owne sleue
A teyne of syluer/ ywel mote he cheue
Whiche that was but an vnce of weyght
And taketh hede nowe of his cursed sleyght
He shope his yngot/ in lenght and in brede
Of the teyne/ withouten any drede
So sly that the preest it not aspyde
And in his sleue agayne he gan it hyde
And from the fyre toke vp his matere
And in to the yngot it put with mery chere
And into the water vessel he it caste
Whan that him lyst/ & bade the preest as faste
Loke what ther is/ put in thyn honde & grope
Thou shalte fynde there syluer as I hope
What deuel of hell shulde it elles be
Shamynge of syluer/ syluer is parde.
He put in his honde/ and toke vp a teyne
Of syluer fyne/ and glad in euery vayne
Was this preest/ whan he sawe it was so
Godder blessyng and his mothers also
And al hallowes/ haue ye sir chanon
Sayd this preest/ and I her mayster son
But and ye vouchsafe to teche me
This noble craft and this subtilte
I wol be yours/ in al that euer I may
Do the chanon/ yet wol I make assay
The seconde tyme/ that ye me wol take hede
And ben expert of this/ and in your nede
Another day assay in myn absence
This disaplyne/ and this crafty science
Lete take another ounce (qd̄ he) tho
Of quycke syluer/ withouten wordes mo
And don therwith/ as I haue don er this
With that other/ whiche that no we syluer is.
¶ This preest him besyeth in al that he can
To don as this chanon/ this cursed man
Comaunded him/ and fast blewe the fyre
For to come to the effecte of his desyre
And this chanon/ right in the meany whyle
All redy was/ this preest eftsone to begyle
And for a countynaunce in his honde bere
An holowe stycke/ take hede and beware
In thende of whiche an vnce and no more
Of syluer lymaile putte was all before
Was in his cole/ and stopped with wexe wel
For to kepen in his lymaile euery dele
And whiles this preest was in his besynesse
This chanon with his stycke gan him dresse
To him anon/ and his powder caste in
As he dyd erst/ the deuyll out of his skyn
Him renne/ I praye to god for his falsshede
For he was euer false in thought and dede
And with his stycke/ abouen the crosselette
That was ordayned with that false ette
He stureth the coles/ tyl al teknt gan
The wexe agayne the fyre/ as euery man
But he a fole be/ wot wel it moste nede
And al that in the stycke was/ out yede
And into the crosselet hastely it fell
The preest supposed nothyng but well
But besyed him faste/ & was wonder fayne
Supposyng nought but trouth/ soth to sayne
He was so glad/ that I can not expresse
In no manere his mirthe and his gladnesse
And to the chanon he proferd eftsone some
Body and good: ye (qd̄ the chanon) anone
Tho I be poore/ crafty thou shalt me fynde
I warne the yet is there more behynde
Is there any coper here within sayd he?
Ye sir (qd̄ the preest) I trow we there be.
Elles go bye some/ and that al swythe!
Nowe good sir go forthe thy way & hythe.
The went his way/ & with the coper he came
And

And this Chanon in his honde it name
And of that coper wayed out but an vnce
Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce
As to myne fire of my wytte the doublenesse
Of this chanon/roote of al cursednesse
He semed frendly/to hem þ knew him nought
But he was fendly/bothe in werke & thought
I werpeth me to tel of his falsenesse
And natheles/ yet wol I it expresse
To the entent that men may be ware therby
And for none other cause truely.
¶ He put this vnce of coper into the crosselet
And on the fyre as swythe he hath it sette
And cast in poulder/ & made the preest to blow
And in his worshyng for to stoupe lowe
As he dyd erste/and al was but a iape
Right as him lyste/ the preest he made his ape
And after warde in the pyngot he it caste
And in the panne put it at the laste
Of water/and in he put his owne honde
And in his sleue/ as ye byfore-honde
Herde me tel/ he had a spruce teyne
He slily tolde it out/ this cursed heyne
Vnwetyng this preest of his false crafte
And in the pannes botome he hath it lafte
And in the water romileth to and fro
And wonder prively tolde vp also
The coper teyne/not knowyng this preest
And hydde it/and hent him by the brest
And to him spake/& thus sayd in his game
Stoupeth adowne/by god ye be to blame
Helpeth me nowe/ as I dyd you whylere
Put in your honde/ and loketh what is there.
¶ This preest tolde vp this spruce teyne anon
And than sayd the chanon/let be gon
Vnto these teynes/which we han wrought
To some goldsmyth/ and wete if it be ought
For by my faythe/ I nolde for my hoode
But if it were spruce fyne and goode
And that as swythe proued shal be.
¶ Vnto the goldsmyth/ with these teynes thre
They went/and put them in assaye
To fyre and hamer/ myght no man say nay
But they were as them ought for to be.
¶ This fonned preest/ wist was gladder than he
Was neuer bryde gladder a yenst the day
Ne wight ypyngale/ a yenst the sesou of May
Was neuer none/ that lyste better to synge
Ne lady lustier in carollyng
And for to speke of loue and womanhede
Ne knyght in armes/ to don a hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady derre
Than had this preest/ this crafte to lere
And to the chanon/ thus he spake/ and said
For the loue of god/ that for vs all deyd
And as I may deserue it vnto you
What shall this resyd cost/ telleth me nowe?
¶ By our lady (qd̄ this chanon) it is derre
I warne you wel/ saue I and a frere
In Englande/there can no man it make.
No force (qd̄ he) nowe sir for goddes sake
What shal I pay/ tel me I you pray.
Iwys (qd̄ he) it is ful dere I say
Syr at one worde/ if that ye lyst it haue
Ye shal paye fourty pounde/ so god me saue
And nere the frendshyp that ye dyd er this
To me/ ye shulde pay more iwys.
¶ This preest the sōme of fourty poūde anon
Of nobles fette/ and tolde hem euerychon
To this chanon/ for this ilke receyte
Al his worshyng was fraude and disceyte.
Sir preest he said/ I hope for to haue no loos
Of my crafte/ for I wolde it were kept cloos
And as ye loue me/ kepeth it derre
For and men knowe al my subtelte
By god men wolde haue so great enuye
To me/ bycause of my philosophye
I shulde be ded/ there were non other way
¶ God it forbyd (qd̄ the preest) what ye say
Yet had I leuer spende al the good
Which that I haue/ and elles waye I wood
Than that ye shulde falley in suche mischefe
For your good wyl haue ye right good preue
(qd̄ the chanon) and farwel graunt mercy
He went his way/ & neuer the preest hym sy
After that day: & when that this preest shulde
Wasen assay/ at suche tyme as he wolde
Of this receyte/ farwel it nolde not be
Lo thus bewaped and begyled was he
Thus maketh he his introduccion
To bring folke to ber distruccion.
Consydereth sirs/ how we in eche estate
Bothe yong and olde in deceyte
So besy is/ that vnnethes there is none
That can auoyde/ the hundreth part at one
The vnsyghte stappes/ of this enuyous fende
That in good feyth I trowe that it be

The grettest cause of suche scarsyte
These philosophers spekyn so mistyly
In this craste/ that men can not come therby
For any wytte that men haue nowe a dayes
They may wel chaitre & iangle as do ỳ prayes
And in her termes/ set her luste and payne
But to her purpose shul they neuer attayne
A man may lightly lerne/ if he haue ought
To multiplye/ and bring his good to nought
Lo/ suche a lucre is in this lusty game
A mans mynde it wol turne al to grame
And empten also great and heuy purses
And maken folke to purchase curses
Of hem that han also her good pleinte
O fye for shame/ they that han be brente
Alas/ can not they flye the fyres hete
Ye that it vsen/ I rede that ye it lete
Lest ỳ ye lesen al/ for better than neuer is late
Neuer to thinne/ were to longe a date
Though ỳ ye prolle aye/ ye shal it neuer synde
Ye ben as bolde as is bayarde the blynde
That blondereth forth/ & perill casteth he none
He is as bolde to renne agenst a stone
As for to go besyde in the way
So fare ye/ that multiplyen I say
If that your eyen can not sene a right
Loketh that your mynde lacke not his syght
For though ye loke neuer so wyde & stare
Ye shal not wynne a myte in that chaffare
But waste al that ye may rape and renne
Withdrawe the fyre/ leste it to faste brenne
Medleth with that arte no more I mene
For if ye done/ your thryfte is goon ful clene
And right as swythe I wol you tellen here
What ỳ the philosophers sayn in this matere.
¶ Lo thus sayth Arnolde of the newe toun
As his rosarye maketh mencioun
He sayth right thus/ withouten any lye
There may no man Mercurye mortifye
But if it be with his brothers knowleging
Lo howe that he/ whiche first said this thyng
Of philosophers father was/ Hermes
He sayth howe the dragon doutles
Ne dyeth not/ but if he be slayne
With his brother: And this is for to sayne
By the dragon Mercurye/ and none other
He vnderstode ỳ sumstone was his brother
That out of Sol and Luna were ydrawe
And therfore sayd he/ take hede to my sawe
Let no man bespe sinn this arte for to lerne
But he that the entencion and spreche
Of philosophers vnderstonde can
And if he do/ he is a lewde man
For this science/ and this conning (qd̄ he)
Is of the serre of the secres parde.
¶ Also there was a disciple of Plato
That on a tyme sayd his master to
As his boke Senior wol bere wytnesse
And this was his demaunde in sothfastnesse
Tell me the name of the philosophres stone.
¶ And Plato answerde vnto him anone
Take the stone that Tytanos men name.
¶ Which is ỳ (qd̄ he) Magnatia is the same
Sayd Plato: ye sir and is it thus?
This is ignotum per ignotius
What is magnatia/ good sir I you pray.
¶ It is a water that is made I say
Of elementes foure (quod Plato)
¶ Tel me the roche good sir (qd̄ he tho)
Of that water/ if it be your wyll.
Nay nay (qd̄ Plato) certayne that I nyll
The philosophers were yswore echone
That they shulde discouer it vnto none
Ne in no boke it write in no manere
For vnto Christ it is so lefe and dere
That he wol not that it discouered be
But where it lyketh to his deme
Man to enspyre and eke for to defende
Whan that him lyketh/ so this is his ende.
¶ Than cōclude I thus/ sens ỳ god of heuen
Ne wyl not that the philosophers nemen
Howe that a man shal come vnto this stone
I rede as for the beste/ let it gone
For who so maketh god his aduersarye
As for to werche any thing in contrarye
Vnto his wyll/ certes neuer shal he thinne
Though that he multeplye terme of his lyue
And there a poynte/ for ended is my tale
God sende euery true man bote of his bale.

¶ Here endeth the tale of the chanons yeman/ and here folowyth the doctour of phisykes prologue.

Phis

Hay this yeman his tale ended had
Of this false chanon/which was so bad
Our hoste gan say/ trusly and certayne
This preest was begyled/sothe for to sayne
He wenyng for to be a philosopher
Tyl he right no golde lefte in his coffer
And sothly this preest had alther iape
This cursed chanon put in his hoode an ape
But al this passe I ouer as now
Sir doctour of Phisyke/yet I pray you
Tel vs a tale of some honest mater
It shal be done/if that ye wol it here
Sayd this doctour/ and his tale bygan anon
Lo w good men (qd he) herkeneth everychon.

Here endeth the doctour of phy-
sikes prologue/and here be-
gynneth his tale.

Here was/as telleth vs Tytus Liuius
A knyght that cleped was Virginius
Fulfylled of honour and of worthynesse
And stronge of frendes/and of eyghesse.
A doughter he had by his wyfe
And neuer had he mo but al his lyfe
Fayre was this mayde in excellent beaute
Aboue euery wight that man may se
For nature hath/with souerayne diligence
Formed her in so great excellence
As though she wolde say/lo I nature
Thus can I forme and paynte a creature
Whan that me lyste/who can me counterfete
Pygmalio not/ though he alway forge & bete
Or graue or paynte/for I dare wel sayne
Apelles/ or zeuxis/ shulde werche in vayne
To graue or paynte/or forge or bete
If they presumed me to counterfete
For he that is the soueraine principall
Hath made me his vycar generall
To werke and paynte erthely creatures
Right as me lyste/for al thyng in my cure is
Vnder the moone/ that may wane and waxe
And for my werke/nothyng wol I axe
My lorde and I ben fully of a corde
I made her to the worshyp of my lorde
So do I al myn other creatures
Of what colloure they be/ or of what fygures
Thus semeth me that nature wolde say.
This mayde was of age twelue yere & tway
In whiche that nature hath such delyte
For right as she can paynte a lilye whyte
And rody as rose/ right with such peynture
She paynted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne/vpon her lymmes fre
Where als bright as such colours shulde be

Vnd

And Phebus died had her tresses grete
Lyke to the fyrmes of his burned hete
And if that excellent were her beaute
A thousande folde more vertuous was she
In her ne lacketh no condicioun
That is to preyse/ as by discrecioun
As wel in body as in goste/ chaste was she
For whiche she floured in virginite
With al humplyte and abstynence
With al attemperaunce/ and patience
With mesure eke/ and beryng of array
Discrete she was in answerynge alway
Tho she were wyse as Pallas/ dare I sayn
(Her facounde eke/ ful womanly and playn)
No counterfayted termes had she
To seme wyse: but after her degree
She spake/ and al her wordes more & lesse
Sowynyng in vertue and in gentylnesse
Shamfast she was/ i maydes shamfastnesse
Constant in hert/ and euer in busynesse
To dryue her out of all slogardry
Bacchus had of her mouthe no maistry
For wyne and youth done Venus encrece
As men in fyre wol casten oyle or grece
And of her owne vertue vnconstrayned
She hath ful ofte her syke prayned
For that she wolde flye the company
Where lykely was to treten of foly
As is at festes/ at reuels/ and at daunces
That ben occasyons of daliaunces
Suche thinges makeyn children for to be
Vs fonde vyce and bolde/ as men may se
Whiche is ful perilous/ and hath ben pore
For al to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldenesse/ whan she is a wyfe.
And ye maistresses in your olde lyfe
That lordes doughters han in gouernaunce
Ne taketh of my worde no displesaunce
Thynke that ye ben set in gouernynges
Of lordes doughters/ onely for two thynges
Eyther for ye han kepte your honeste
Eyther ye han fallen in freelte
And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce
And conne forsake fully mischaunce
For euermore/ therfore for Chastes sake
Ieopeth wel tho that ye vndertake.
¶ Al these of Bacus that hath forlaste
His sykerousnesse/ and al his theues craste
Kan kype a forest best of any man
Now ben ykepeth hem wel/ for ye wol ye kan
Loketh wel/ to no vice that ye assent
Lest ye be dampned for your vyel entent
For who so dothe/ a traytour is certayn
And taketh kepe of that I shal you sayn
Of al treyson souerayne pestilence
Is/ whan a wight betrayeth innocence
Ye fathers/ and eke ye mothers also
Though ye han children/ be it one or mo
Your is the charge of al her sufferaunce
Whiles they ben in your gouernaunce
Beth ware/ that by ensample of your lyuyng
Either by your negligence in chastisynge
That they ne perisshe: for I dare wel say
If that they don/ ye shal ful sore abey
Vnder a shepherde soste and negligent
The wolf hath many a shepe & lambe to rent
Suffyseth one ensample now as here
For I mote turne a yen to my matere.
¶ This mayde/ of which I tel my tale expresse
She kepte her selue/ she neded no maistresse
For in her lyuyng maydens myght rede
As in a boke/ euery good worke and dede
That longeth to a mayde vertuous
She was so prudent and so bountuous
For whiche out spronge on euery syde
Bothe of her beaute and of her bounte wyde
That thorowe the lode they preysed her echon
That loued vertue/ saue enuy alone
That sorye is of other mennes wele
And gladde is of her sorowe/ and vnhele
The doctour maketh this discripcioun
This mayde went on a day into the toun
Towarde the temple/ with her mother dere
As is of yonge maydens the manere.
¶ Now was there a Iustice in the toun
That gouernour was of that regioun
And so befyl/ this Iustice his eyen cast
Vpon this mayde/ auysyng her ful fast
As she came forby/ there as the Iuge stode
Anon his hert chaunged and his mode
So was he caught with beaute of this mayd
And to him selfe ful prively he sayd
This mayde shal be myne for any man
Anon the fende in to his hert ran
And taught him sodainly/ by what sleight
The mayde to his purpose wynne he myght
For

For certes/by no force/ne by no mede
Him thought he was not able for to spede
For she was stronge of frendes/and eke she
Confermed was in swiche sourrayne beaute
That wel he wyste he might her neuer wynne
As for to make her with her body synne
For whiche with great deliberacioun
He sent after a clerk in to the toun
The whiche he knewe ful subtyl & ful bolde
This mayd vnto this clerk his tale hath tolde
In secrete wyse/and made him to ensure
He shulde telle it vnto no creature
And if he dyd/he shulde lese his hede
Whan assented was this cursed rede
Glad was the mayd/and made good chere
And gaue him gyftes precious and dere.
¶ Whan shapen was al this conspyracie
Fro poynt to poynt/how we that his lechrie
Parfourmed shulde be ful subtelly
As ye shullen after here openly
Home gothe this clerk/ ỳ hyght Claudius
This false iuge/ that hyght Appius
So was his name/for it is no fable
But knowen for an hiftorial thing notable
The sentence of it sothe is out of doute
Thus false iuge gothe now we faste aboute
To hasten his desyre/ al that he may
And so byfell/that sone after on a day
This false iuge/ as telleth vs the storie
As he was wonte/ sate in his consystorie
And gaue his domes vpon sondrie caas
Thus false clerk came forth a ful gret pas
And sayd sorde/if it be your wyll
As dothe me right vpon this pytous byll
In whiche I playne vpon Virginius
And if he wol say it is not thus
I wol proue it/and synde good witnesse
That sothe is that my byll wol expresse.
¶ The iuge answerde/of thyn in his absence
I may not geue diffynite sentence
Let do him call/and I wol gladly here
Thou shalte haue right/and no wronge here.
¶ Virginius came to wete the iuges wyll
And right anon was radde this cursed byll
The sentence of it/ was as ye shal here.
¶ To you my lorde Appius so dere
Sheweth your poore seruaunt Claudius
How we that a knyght called Virginius
Ayenst the lawe/and ayenst al equite
Holdeth expresse ayenst the wyl of me
My seruant / whiche that is my thral by right
Which from myn hous was stolen on a night
Whyles she was ful yonge/I wol it preue
By witnesse lorde/so that ye you not greue
She is not his doughter/what so he say
Wherfore my lorde iustyce I you pray
Yelde me my thrall/if it be your wyll
Lo this was al the sentence of that byll.
¶ Virginius gan vpon the clerk beholde
But hastely/er he his tale tolde
He wolde haue defended it/as shulde a knyght
And by witnesse of many a trewe wyght
That al was false/that sayd his aduersary
This cursed iuge wolde no lenger tary
Ne here a worde more of Virginius
But gaue his iugement/and sayd thus.
¶ I deme anon this clerk his seruaunt haue
Thou shalte no lenger her in thyn house saue
Go bring her forthe/& put her in our warde
This clerk shal haue his thral/thus I award
¶ And whan this worthy knight Virginius
Through the assent of the iuge Appius
Muste by force his dere doughter yeuen
Vnto the iuge/in lechery to lyuen
He gothe him home/& set him in his hall
And sete anon his dere doughter call
And with face dede as asshen colde
Vpon her humble face he gan beholde
With fathers pyte/ stikyng through his herte
Al wolde he not from his purpose conuerte.
¶ Doughter (qd he) Virginia by thy name
There ben two wayes/either dethe or shame
That thou muste suffer/ alas ỳ I was borne
For neuer thou deseruedest wherfore
To dyen/with a swerde or with a knyfe
Oh dere doughter/comforte of my lyfe
Whiche I haue fostred vp with suche plesaunce
That thou ne were out of my remembraunce
O doughter/ whiche that arte my laste wo
And in my lyfe my laste ioye also
O mirrour of chastyte/in patience
Take thou thy dethe/this is my sentence
For sothe/ and not for hate thou muste be dede
My pitous honde mote smyte of thyn hede
Alas that euer Appius the sey
Thus hath he falsly iuged the to day

P.iii. And

And tolde her al the case/as ye before
Han herde/it needth not to telle it more.
¶ O mercy dere father (qd this mayde)
And with that worde/bothe her armes layde
Aboute his necke/as she was wonte to do
The teres braste out of her eyen two
And sayd/ O good father shal I dye
Is there no grace: is there no remedye:
¶ No certes dere doughter myn (qd he)
Than yeue me leaue father myn (qd she)
Myn dethe to complayne a lytel space
For parde/ Jepte yaue his doughter grace
For to complayne/er he her slough/ alas
And god it wote/nothing was her trespas
But that she ranne her father first to se
To welcome hym/ with great solempnyte
And with that worde she fel a swoune anon
And after/ whan her swounyng was gon
She ryseth vp/and to her father sayde
Blessed be god that I shal dye a mayde
Yeue me my dethe/er that I haue a shame
Doth wt your child your wil a goddes name
And with that worde/she prayeth him ful ofte
That with his swerde he shuld smyte her softe
And with that worde/a swoune down she fell
Her father/ with sorowfull herte and fell
Her heed of smote/and by the toppe it hente
And to the iuge he it yaue in presente
As he sate in dome in consistoire
Whan the iuge it sawe/as sayth the storie
He bade take him/ and honge him also faste
But right anon al the people in thraste
To saue the knight/for routhe and for pyte
For knowen was the iuges iniquite
The people anon had suspecte in this thyng
By maner of this clyentes chalengyng
That it was by the assent of Appius
They wyste wel that he was lecherous
For whiche vnto Appius they gon
And besien him in prison right anon
Where as he slowe him selfe/ and Claudius
That seruaunt was vnto this Appius
Was demed for to be honged vpon a tre
But Virginius/of his great pyte
So prayed for him/ that he was exiled
And elles certes he had ben begyled
The remenaunt were honged/more and lesse
That consented were to this cursydnesse.

¶ Here may men se how syn hath his merye
Beware/for no mã wote how god wol smyte
Jn no degre/ne in no maner wyse
The woune of conscience wol aryse
Of wicked lyfe/ though it so pryuy be
That no man wote of it but god and he
Whether he be knyght man or lered
He not how sone he may ben afered
Therfore I rede you this counsayle take
Forsake synne/ or synne you forsake.

¶ Here endeth the doctour of phisykes tale/ and folowyth the wordes of the hoste.

Our hoste gan swere/as he were woode
Harowe (qd he) by nayles and by bloode
This was a false theef/a cursed iustice
As shamful dethe/ as herte may deuyse
Come to the iustice and her aduocas
Algate this sely mayden is slayne/ alas
Alas to dere abought she her beaute
Wherfore I say/ that al men may se
That yeftes of fortune/or of nature
Ben cause of dethe of many a creature
Her beaute was her dethe/ I dare wel sayne
Alas so pitously as she was slayne
But herof wol I not procede as nowe
Myn haue ful ofte more harme than prowe
But trucky myn owne maister dere
This is a pytous tale for to here
But natheless/ passe ouer is no force
I pray to god to saue thy gentil cors
And thy vrinalles/and thy iordanes
Thyn ypocras/and eke thy galyanes
And euery boyste ful of letuarye
God blesse hem and our lady saynt Marye
So mote I the/ thou arte a propre man
And lyke a prelate/by saynt Runyan
Saue that I cay not speke wel in terme
But wel I wote/thou dost myn hert to yerne
That I haue almost yraught a cardyacle
By corpus domini/ but I haue tryacle
Or elles a draught of moyste corny ale
Or but I here anon a nother merry tale
Myn herte is lost/for pyte of this mayde
Thou belamy/thou Johan pardoner he sayd
Tell vs some merry tale/ or iape/ right anon.

¶ I

I ſhal be ſhon (qꝺ he) by ſayne Ronyon
But fyrſt (qꝺ he) here at this ale ſtake
I wol bothe drynke/and eate of a cake
But right anon/ thefe gentels gon to pape
Say/let him tel vs of no vchaundrye
Tel vs ſome mozal thing/that we mo we lere
Some wytte/ and than wol we gladly here
I graunt (qꝺ he) i wys/ but I mote thinke
On ſome honeſt thing/ whyles ỹ I drinke.

¶ Here endeth the wordes of the hoſt/ and here folowyth the prologue of the Pardoner.

Lordynges (qꝺ he) in chyrch whan I preche
I payne me to haue an hauteyn ſpeche
And ryng it out/ as rounde as doth a bel
For I can al be roote/ that I tel
My terme is al wape/ and euer was
(Radix omnium malorum eſt cupiditas)
Fyrſt I pronounce fro whens I come
And than my bylles I ſhewe al and ſome
Our lorde ſoule ſeale on my patent
That ſhewe I fyrſt/ my body to warent
That no man be ſo bolde/ preeſt ne clerke
Me to diſtourbe/ of Chriſtes holy werke
And after that/tel I forthe my tales
Bulles of Popes/ and of Cardynales
Of Patriarkes/and of Byſſhopes I ſhewe
And in latyn I ſpeke wordes a fewe
To fauer with my predication
And for to ſtyrre men to deuotion
Than ſhewe I forth my long chriſtal ſtones
Ycrammed ful of clouted and of bones
Relykes they ben/as wene they echone
Than haue I in laton a ſholderbone
Whyche that was of an holy iewes ſheepe.
Good men ſaye I/take of my wordes kepe
If that this bone be waſſhen in any wel
If cow or calfe/ ſheepe/ or oxe ſwel
That any worme hath eeten/ or hen ſtonge
Take water of this wel/ and waſſhe his tong
And it is hole anon: and farthermore
Of pockes/and of ſcabbes/ and euery ſore
Shal ſheepe be hole/that of this wel
Dronketh a draught/take kepe of that I tel.
¶ If the good man that the beeſtes oweth
Wol euery day/ er the cocke crowth
Faſtyng drinke of this wel a draught
As thilke holy iewe our eldres taught
His beeſtes and his ſtore ſhal multiplye
And ſyrſt/alſo it healeth ielouſye
For though a man be fal in ielous rage
Let make with this water his potage
And neuer ſhal he more his wyfe miſtryſt
Though he in ſothe the defaute by her wyſt
Al had ſhe take preeſtes two or thre.
Here is a mytayne eke/that ye may ſe
He that his honde wol put in this mitayne
He ſhal haue multiplyeng of his grayne
Whan he hath ſowen/ be it whete or otes
So that he offer good pens or grotes.
And men & women/ o thyng I warne you
If any wight ben in this churche now
That hath done ſynne horrible/ that he
Dare not for ſhame of it ſhryuen be
Or any woman/ be ſhe ponge or olde
That hath made her huſbonde cokewolde
Suche folke ſhal haue no powre ne no grace
To offre to my relykes in this place
And who ſo fyndeth hym out of ſuche blame
Cometh vp and offre in goddes name
And I aſſoyle hym by the auctorite
Suche as by bulle was graunted to me.
¶ By this gaude ham I wonne euery yere
An hundred marke/ ſythen I was pardoner
I ſtonde lyke a clerke in my pulpet
And the lewde people doune ſet
I preche ſo as ye haue herd here before
And tel an hundred iapes more
Than payne I me to ſtreeche forthe my neeke
And eſte and weſt/ vpon the people I beeke
As doth a doue/ ſyttyng vpon a berne
Mine handes and my tonge gon ful yerne
That it is ioy to ſe my buſynneſſe
Of auarice/ and of ſuche curſydneſſe
Al my preching is for to make hem free
To yeuen her pens/ and namely vnto me
For my entent is not but for to wynne
And nothing for correction of ſynne
I recke neuer/ whan that they ben beryed
Thoughe her ſoules gon a blacke burned
For certes many a predication
Cometh oft tyme of yuel entencion.
¶ Some for plefaunce of folke/ & for flatery
To ben auaunced by ypocriſy

And

And some for veyne glorie/and some for hate
For when I dare not other wayes debate
Than wol I stynge hem with my tonge smerte
In preching/so that he shal not asterte
To ben diffamed falsly/if that he
Hath trespased to my brethern or to me
For though I telle not his propre name
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes/or by other circumstances
Thus quyte I folke/ ꝑ dothe vs displesances
Thus put I out my venym vnder hewe
Of holynesse/to semen holy and trewe
But shortly myn entent I wol devyse
I preche of nothyng but of coveityse
Therfore my temetis pet/and ever was
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas.
Thus can I preache ayenst the same vyce
Which that I vse/and that is avarice
But though myself be gilty in that synne
Yet can I maken other folke to twynne
From avarice/and sore hem to repent
But that is not my principall entent
I preche nothyng but for coveityse
Of this matere/it ought ynough suffyse.
Than tel I hem ensamples many one
Of olde stories/longe tyme agone
For lewde people loven tales olde
Swiche thynges they can wel reporte & holde
What trowe ye/ whiles that I may preche
And wynne gode and silver for to teche
That I wol lyve in povert wilfully :
Nay nay/I thought it never trewly
For I wol preche and begge in sondry londes
I wol not do no labour with myn hondes
Ne make baskettes/and lyve thereby
Bycause I wol not begge idelly
I wol none of the apostles counterfete
I wol have money/mault/ chese/ & whete
Al were it yeven of the poorest page
Or of the poorest wydowe in a village
Though her children shuld sterve for famyne
Nay/I wol drinke the licour of the vyne
And have a ioly wenche in every toun
But herkeneth lordynges in conclusioun.
Your lykyng is that I shulde tel a tale
Now have I dronken a draught of corny ale
By god I hope I shal tel you a thyng
That shal by reson ben at your lykyng
For though myself be a ful vicious man
A moralle tale yet I you tel can
Which I am wonte to preche/for to winne
Now holdeth your peace/my tale I wol begynne.

Here endeth the Pardoners prologue/and here telleth his tale.

In Flaunders whilom ther was a cõpany
Of yonge folke/ that haunted folý
As hasarde/ryotte/ Stewes/ & tauernes
Where as with harpes/ lutes/ and gyternes
They daunsen & playen at dyse nyght & day
And eten also/ ouer that her myght may
Through whiche they don the dyuel sacrifyce
Within the dyuels temple/ in cursed wyse
By superfluite abhominable
Her othes ben so great and so damnable
That it is grusly for to here hem swere
Our blessed lordes body they al to tere
Hem thought iewes rent hym not ynough
And eche of hem at others synne lough.
And right anon comen in tombesteres
Fetys and smale and yonge fruytesteres
Syngers with harpes/ baudes/ and wafereres
Whiche that ben verely the deuels officers
To kyndlen and blowe the fyre of lecherý
That is annexed vnto glotoný
The holy writte take I to my witnesse
That lecherý is in wyne and dronkenesse.
¶ Lo how that dronken Lothe vnkyndely
Lay by his doughters two vnwetyngly
So dronke he was/ he nyst what he wroughte
And therfore sore repent hym oughte
Herodes/ who so wol the storyes seche
Ther may ye lerne/ & by ensample teche
What he of wyne was replete at his feste
Right at his owne table/ yaue his heste
To sleen Johan the Baptiste ful guiltesse
Seneke sayth eke good wordes doutlesse
He sayth he can no difference fynde
Betwyxt a man that is out of his mynde
And a man that is dronkelewe
But woodnesse that is fallen in a shrewe
Persewereth lenger than dothe dronkenesse
O glotený/ ful of cursydnesse
O cause first of our confusyon
O original of our dampnacion
Til Crist had bought vs wt his blode agayn
Lo how we were/ shortly for to sayn
Dought was first this cursed vilanye
Corrupt was al this worlde through glotený
Adam our fadir and his wyfe also
Fro Paradyse/ to labour and to wo
Were dryuen for that vyce/ it is no drede
For whyles that Adam fasted/ as I rede
He was in paradyse/ and whan that he
Ete of the fruite/ defended on the tre
Anon he was out caste to wo and payne
O glotenye/ on the wel ought vs to playne.
¶ Oh/ wyste a man how many maladyes
Folowth of expresse and of glotenyes
He wolde ben the more mesurable
Of his dyete/ sittyng at his table
Alas the shorte throte/ the tendre mouthe
Maketh that est/ & west/ north/ and southe
In erthe/ in eyre/ in water/ men to swynke
To getten a glotoun dayntye mete and dynke
Of this matter/ o Poule wel canste thou trete
Meate vnto wombe/ & wombe eke vnto mete
Shal god destroy bothe as Poule sayth
Alas/ a foule thing it is by my fayth
To say this worde/ and foulest is the dede
Whan men so dronken of the whyte and rede
That of his throte he maketh his pryue
Through thilke cursed superfluite.
¶ The apostle sayth/ wepyng ful pitously
There walken many/ of whiche tolde haue I
I say it now wepyng with pitous voyce
There ben enempes of Christes croyse
Of whiche the ende is deth/ wombe is her god
O belly/ O wombe/ O stynkyng cod
Fulfylled of donge and of corrupcion
At eyther ende of the foule is the soun
How great coste and labour is to synde
These cokes: how they stampe/ straynen/ & grinde
And turne substaunce in to accident
To fulfyl al thy lycorous talent
Out of the harde bones knocken they
The mary/ for they caste it not awey
That may go through the gullet saufe & sote
Of spycerie/ of leues/ barke/ and rote
Shal ben his sauce ymade by delyte
To make hym have a newer apetyte
But certes he that haunteth suche delytes
Is deed/ whiles that he lyueth in the vytes
¶ A lecherous thing is wyne and dronkenesse
It is ful of stryuing and of wretchydnesse
O dronken man/ disfygured is thy face
Sowr is thy breth/ foule art thou to embrace
And through thy dronken nose soun wheth & snoryth
As tho thou saydest aye/ Samson Samson
And yet god wote Samson dronke neuer wyne
Thou fallest/ as it were a stycked swyne

Thy

Thy tonge is lost/ and al thyn honeste cure
For dronkennesse is very sepulture
Of mannes wytte/and his discretion
In whom that dronke hath dominacion
He can no counsaile kepe/it is no drede
Nowe kepe you fro the white and fro ỳ rede
Namely fro the white wyne of Lepe
That is to sel in Fisshe strete and in Chepe
This wyne of Spayne crepeth subtelly
In other wynes growyng fast by
Of whiche riseth suche fumosyte
That whan a man hath dröß draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe
He is in Spayne / right at the towne of Lepe
Nought at Rochel/ ne at Burdeaux toun
And than wol he say/ Sampsoun Sapsoun
But herkneth lordinges o worde/I you pray
That al the souerayne actes/ dare I say
Of victories in the olde Testament
That thorowe very god/ that is omnypotent
Were don in abstynence and in prayere
Loketh the Byble/and there ye mowe it lere.
Loketh Attyla/ the great conquerour
Deyd in his slepe/with shame and dishonour
Bledyng aye at his nose in dronkenesse
A capitayne shulde lyue in sobernesse.
And ouer al this / auyse you right wel
What was cõmaunded vnto Lamuel:
Nat Samuel: but Lamuel saye I
Redeth the Byble/and fyndeth it expressly
Of wyne yeuyng to hem that haue iustyce
No more of this/for it may ynough suffyce.

And nowe that I haue spoke of glotonye
Nowe wol I defende you hasardrye
Hasarde is very mother of lesynges
And of disceyte/and cursed forswerynges
Blaspheme of crist/mãslaughter/ & wast also
Of catayle ofte tyme/and of other mo
It is reprefe/and contrarye to honour
For to be holden a cõmen hasardour
And euer the hyer that he is of estate
The more he is holden desolate
If that a prince vse hasardrye
In al gouernaunce and policie
He is as by comen opynyon
Holde the lesse in reputacion.
C Stylleboy/ ỳ was holde a wyse ambassa-
dour
Was sent in to Corinthe wt ful great honour
Fro Lacydone/to maken hem alyaunce
And whan he came/happed this chaunce
That al the greatest that were of ỳ londe
Playeng at hasarde he hem fonde
For whiche/as sone as it might be
He stale him home ayen to his countre
And sayd/there wol I not lese my name
I nyll not take on me so great defame
For to alye you to none hasardours
Sendeth other wyser ambassadours
For by my trouthe/me were leuer dye
Than I shulde you to hasardours alye
For ye that ben so glorious in honours
Shal not alye you with hasardours
As by my wyl/ne by my tretie
This wyse philosopher/thus sayd he.
C Loke eke howe to kyng Demetrius
The kyng of Parthes/ as the boke sayth he
Sent him a payre of dyce of golde in scorne
For he had vsed hasardrye there byforne
For whiche he helde his glorie & his renoun
At no value or reputacioun
Lordes might fynde other maner play
Honest ynough to drive the day away.

Nowe wol I speke of othes false & great
A worde or two/ as other bokes entreat
Great swerynge is thing abhominable
And false swering is yet more reprouable
The hye god forbade swerynge at all
Witnesse of Matheu/ but in special
Of swering/sayth the holy Jeremye
Thou shalte swere sothe thy other/ & not he
And swere in doome and eke in right wyssheste
But yelde swering is a cursednesse.
C Beholde and se that in the first table
Of hye goddes hestes honorable
Howe that the seconde heste of him is this
Take not my name in vayne as amys
Lo/he rather forbyddeth suche swerynge
Than homicide/or any other cursed thing
I say as thus/by order it stondeth
This knoweth they ỳ his hestes vnderstondeth
Howe that the seconde heste of god is that
And further more/I wol the tell al plat
That vengeaunce shal not parte fro his hous
That of his othes is to outrageous

By

By goddes precious herte/and his nayles
And by the blode of Crist/that is in Hayles
Seuen is my chaunce/and thyn fyue & thre
By goddes armes/if thou falsly playe me
This dagger shal throughout thyn herte go
This fruit cometh of the bones two
Forswering/ire/falsnesse/and homycide
Now for the loue of Crist that for vs dyde
Leaue your othes/bothe great and smale
For I shal tel you a nother tale.
¶These ryottours three/of whiche I telle
Longe erste or prime ronge any belle
Were set hem in a tauerne to drinke
And as they sate/they herde a belle clynke
Before a corse/that was caryed to his graue
That one of hem gan call to his knaue
Go bette (quod he) and aske redyly
What corse is this/that passeth forthe by
And loke that thou reporte his name wele.
¶Sir (qd he) it needeth neuer a dele
It was me told er ye came here two houres
He was parde an olde felawe of yours
And sodeinly he was yslayne to nyght
For dronke as he sate on his benche vpright
There came a preuy theef/men clepen deathe
That in this contrey all the people slethe
And with his spere he smote his herte a two
And went his way/without any wordes mo
He hath a thousande slayne/this pestilence
And maister/er ye come in his presence
Me thynketh that it were necessarye
For to be ware of suche an aduersarye
Be redy for to mete him euermore
Thus taught me my dame/I say no more.
¶By seynt Mary/sayd this tauerner
The childe sayth sothe/for he hath this yere
Here ouer a myle/slayne in a great village
Bothe man and woman/childe and page
I trow his habitacion be there
To dey anyfold/great wysdome it were
Er that he dyd a man dishonour.
¶Ye goddes armes (qd this ryottour)
Is suche perill with him for to mete?
I shal him seke by stile and eke by strete
I make a vow/by goddes digne bones
Herkeneth felawes/we three be al ones
Let eche of vs holde vp his hande to other
Eche of vs become other fere brother
And we wil slee this falsse traytour death
He shal be slayne: that so many sleeth
By goddes dignite/er that it be nyght
¶Togeder han these three her trouthes plight
To lyue and dye eche of hem with other
As though he were his owne brother
And vp they sterten al dronken in this rage
And forthe they gone/towarde that village
Of whiche the tauerner hath spoke before
And many a grisly othe han they sworne
And Cristes blessed body they to rente
Deathe shal he dede/and we may him hente.
¶Whan they han gone not fully a myle
Right as they wolde haue troden ouer a style
An olde poore man with hem mette
This olde man ful mekely hem grette
And sayd/no we louedynges god you se.
¶The proudest of these ryottours three
Answerde ayen/what chorle with harde grace
Why art thou al forwrapped saue thy face?
Why lyuest thou so longe in so great age?
¶This olde man gan loken in his visage
And sayd thus: for I can not fynde
A man/though I walked into Inde
Neyther in cyte/ne in no village
That wol chaunge his youthe for myn age
And therfore mote I haue myn age stylle
As longe tyme as it is goddes wylle.
Ne deathe alas/ne wil not haue my lyfe
Thus walke I lyke a restlesse caityfe
And on the grounde/which is my mothers gate
I knocke with my staffe erlyche and late
And say/leue mother let me in
Lo how I vanysshe/flesshe/bloode/& skyn
Alas/when shall my bones be at reste
Mother with you wolde I chaunge my cheste
That in my chamber longe tyme hath be
Ye for an heren clouts to wrappe in me
But yet to me she wol not done that grace
For whiche ful walked is my face
But sire/to you it is no countrefe
To speken vnto an olde man vilanye
But he trespace in worde eyther in dede
In holy writte/ye may your selfe wel rede
Ayenst an olde man/hoor vpon his heede
Ye shulde aryse/therfore I you rede
Ne dooth vnto an olde man no harme as now
No more than ye wolde a man dyd you

In age/if that ye may so longe abyde
And god be with you/whether ye go or ryde
I mote go thyder as I haue to go
¶ Nay olde chorle/by god thou shalt not so
Sayd these other hasardours anon
Thou partest not so lightly by sayntt Johñ
Thou spakest right now of thilke traytor deth
That in this countre al our frendes slethe
Haue here my trouthe thou art his espye
Tel where he is/or els thou shalt dye
Ye god and by the holy sacrament
For/sothely thou art of his assent
To slee vs yonge folke/thou falsse theefe.
¶ Now sirs/if it be to you so lefe
To fynde dethe/turne vp this croked way
For in that grove I lefte him by my fay
Vnder a tree/and there he wol abyde
Ne for your boste he nyll him nothyng hyde
Se ye yonder ok/right there ye shal him fynde
God saue you/that bought agen mankynde
And you amende/thus sayd this olde man.
¶ Than eyrychc of these tyottours ran
Tyl they came to the tree/& there they founde
Floreynes of golde fyne/ycoyned rounde
Wel nye a seuen bussheles/as hem thought
No lenger than after dethe they sought
But ech of hem so glad was of that syght
For that the floreyns so fayre hem bight
That doune they sytte/by the precious horde
The worst of hem spake the first worde.
¶ Brethern (qõ he) take kepe what I say
My wytte is great/though I borde and play
This tresure hath fortune to vs yeuen
In mynthe and ioliyte our lyfe to lyuen
And lightly as it cõmeth/so wol we spende
Hey/goddes precious herte: who wende
To day/that we shulde haue so fayr a grace?
But might this golde be carped fro this place
Home to my house/or els to ours
(For wel I wote that al this golde is ours)
Than were we in hye felycite
But trewly by day it may not be
Men wolde say/that we were theues stronge
And for our owne tresoure don vs honge
This tresour muste ycaried be by nyght
As wisly and as slily as it might
Wherfore I rede/let lotte amonge vs all
To drawe/& let se where the cutte wol fall
He that hath ye shortest cutte/with hert blythe
Shal renne to the toune/and that ful swythe
To bring vs bred & drinke ful prively
And two of vs shal kepe ful subtelly
This tresour wel/and if he wol not tarye
Whan it is nyght/we wol this tresour carye
By one assent/where as vs lyste best
That one of hem brought grasse in his fest
And bad hem draw/& lote on whom it wold fal
And it fel on the yongest of hem all
And forthe toward the toune he went anone
And also sone as he was gone
That one of hem spake vnto that other
Thou wost wel/thou arte my sworne brother
Thy profyte wol I tel the right anone
Thou woste well that our felowe is gone
And here is golde/and that ful great plente
That shal departed be amonge vs thre
But natheles/if that I can shape it so
That it departed were amonge vs two
Had I not done a frendly turne to the
That other answerd/I not how ye might be
I wolde wel that the golde were ours two
What shulde we do/that it might be so?
¶ Shal it be counsayle (sayd the first shrewe)
And I shal tel the in wordes fewe
What we wol done/and bring it wel about.
¶ I graunt (qõ that other) out of doute
That by my trouth/I wol the not bewrayne
¶ Now (qõ he) thou wost wel we ben twayne
And twayne of vs shal stronger be than oure
Lotte whan he is sette/and than anone
Aryse/as though thou wouldest wt him playe
And I shal ryuen him throughe ye sydes tweye
Whyles ye thou struggleste with him as I gayne
And with thy dagger/lotte thou do the same
And than shal al the golde departed be
My dere frende/betwyxte the and me
Than may we bothe our lustes fulfylle
And playe at dyce/right at our owne wylle
And thus accorded ben these shrewes tweye
To slee the thirde/as ye herde me saye.
This yongeste/whiche ye went to the toune
Ful often in his herte he rolled vp and doune
The beautie of these floreyns fayre & bright
O lorde (qõ he) if so were that I might
Haue al this tresour to my selfe alone
There nys no man/that lyuyng vnder trone

Of

Of gode/that ſhulde ſyue ſo merry an̄ I
And or the ſaſte the ſonde out enemy
Put in his thought/that he ſhulde poyſon bey
Bath whiche he might ſlen his ſelowes twey
For why/the ſtude ſonde him in ſuche lyuing
That he had leue to ſpoze me him to bring
For this was vtterly his entente
To ſlen hem bothe/and neuer to repente.
¶ And forth he gothe/ no langer wold he tary
Jn to the toune/ vnto a potticary
And prayde him that he wol him ſell
Some poyſon/ that he might his rattes quell
And eke there was a polcat in his hawe
That as he ſayd/his capons had ypawe
And ſayd/ he wolde wreken him if ꝑ he might
Of vermyn/ that diſtroyed hem vp nyght.
¶ The potycary anſwerde/thou ſhalt haue
A thynge/as wiſly god my ſoule ſaue
In al this worlde there nys no creature
That eeteth or drynketh of this confecture.
Not but the mountenaunce of a corne of whete
That he ne ſhal his lyfe anon forlete
Ye ſterue he ſhal/ and that in leſſe whyle
Thā thou wouldeſt goon a pace/not but a myle
This poyſon is ſo harde and ſo violent.
¶ This curſed man hath in his honde hent
This poyſon in a boxe/and ſythe he ran
Jn to the neyt ſtrete vnto a man
And borowed him large botels thre
And in the two/the poyſon poured he
The thirde he kept clene for his drynke
For al the nyght he ſhope him for to ſwynke
In carying of the golde out of that place
And whan this riottour/ with ſore grace
Had ſyſed with him his great bottels thre.
To his felowes ayen repayred he.
¶ What nedeth it therof to ſermon more:
For right as they had caſte his deth before
Right ſo they han him ſlayne/ & that anone
And whan this was done/than ſpake ꝑ one
Nowe let vs ſyt and drynke/ & make vs merry
And afterwarde we wolne his body bury
And after that it happed hem par caas
The one tooke the botel/therin the poyſon was
And dronke / and yaue his felowe drynke alſo
Through which anon they ſterued both two.
¶ But certes I ſuppoſe that Auycenne
Wrote neuer in no canon/ ne in no fenne
More wonder ſorowful ſymptomes
Than had theſe wretches two in her endyng
Thus ended ben theſe homicides two
And eke the falſe empoyſonner alſo.
O curſed ſynne/ful of al curſydneſſe
O traytours homicide/ O wickydneſſe
O glotonye/ luxurie/and hazardye
Thou blaſphemour of Chriſt with vilanye
And othes great/of vſage and of pride
Alas mankynde/how may it betyde
That to thy creatour/which ꝑ the wrought
And with his precious bloode the bought
Thou arte ſo falſe and ſo vnkynde/ alas:
Now good mē/god forgeue you yo⁹ treſpas
And ware you fro the ſynne of auarice
Myn holy pardon/may you al warysshe
So that ye offre nobles or ſterlynges
Other eta ſyluer ſponen/brooches/or rynges
Bowith your heed vnder this bulle
Comith vp ye wyues / & offreth of your wull
Your names here I entre in my rolle anon
Jn to the blysſe of heuen ſhul ye al gon
I you aſſoyle by myn high powere
Ye that offren/as clene and eke clere
As ye were borne. Lo ſyrs/ thus I preche
And Jeſu Chriſt/ that is our ſoules leche
So graunt you his pardon to receyue
For that is beſte/ I wol you not deceyue
But ſyrs/one worde forgate I in my tale
I haue relykes/ and pardon in my male
As fayre as any man in Englonde
Which were geuen me by the popes honde
If any of you wol of deuocion
Offren/and haue myn abſolucion
Cometh forthe anon/ and knecleth here adown
That ye may haue parte of my pardoun
Or elſe taketh pardon as ye wende
Al newe and freſſhe/ at euery townes ende
So that ye offren al way newe and newe
Nobles or pens/whiche ben good and trewe
It is great honour to euerychē that is here
That ye may haue a ſufficient pardonere
To aſſoyle you/in countre there ye ryde
For auentures/ whiche that may betyde
For peraunture there may fall one or two
Downe of her horſe/& breke her necke a two
Loke whiche ſuerte it is to you all
That I am in your felowſhyp yfall

For yet vnder the perde was the mayde.
¶ O dere cosyn dan Johan/ she sayde
What eyleth you so rathe to a ryse?
¶ Nere (qd he) it ought ynough suffise
Fyue houres for to sleepen on a nyght
But it were for an olde palied wyght
As ben these olde wedded men/ that lye & dare
As in a forme sytteth a wery hare
Al forstraught/ with houndes gret & smale
But dere nece/ why loke ye so pale?
I trowe certes/ that our good man
Hath you laboured/ sythe this night began
That you were nede to resten hastely
And with that worde/ he lough ful merily
And with his owne thought he woxe al reed.
This fayre wyfe/ gan to shake her heed
And sayd thus/ ye god wote al (qd she)
Nay cosyn myn/ it stondeth not so with me
For by that god that yaue me soule and lyfe
In al the realme of Fraūce/ is there no wyfe
That lesse luste hath to that foly play
For I may synyen alas/ and welaway
That I was borne/ but to no wight (qd she)
Dare I not tel/ how we it stonte with me
Wherfore I thinke out of this world to wende
Or els of my selfe sone to make an ende
So ful I am of drede and eke of care.
¶ This mōke began vpon this wyfe to stare
And sayd alas/ nay nere god forbede
That ye for any sorowe/ or for any drede
For da your selfe/ but telleth me your greefe
Peraventure I may in your mischefe
Counsayle or helpe/ & therfore telleth me
Al your anoye/ for it shal secre be
For on my porthose I make an othe
That neuer in my lyfe/ for lefe ne lothe
Ne shal I not of no counsayle you bewrey.
The same ayen to you (qd she) I say
By god and by this porthose/ I you swere
Though men wolde me al in to peces tere
Ne shal I neuer/ for to go to hell
Bewray o worde/ of thing that ye me tell
Not for no cosynage/ ne for alyaunce
But verily for loue and affyaunce
Thus ben they swore/ and here vpon hyssyle
And ilke of hem tolde other what hem lyste
¶ Cosyn (quod she) if I had a space
As I haue none/ and namely in this place
Than wolde I tel a legende of my lyfe
What I suffred haue/ sythe I was a wyfe
With myn husbonde/ though he be your nyfty
Nay (qd this mōke) by god & seynt Martyn
Here nye no more cosyn vnto me
Than is this lefe/ that hongeth on the tre
I clepte him so/ by cause Dame of Fraunce
To haue the more cause of aqueyntaunce
Of you/ whom I haue loued specially
Aboue al other women specially
Thus swere I you on my profession
Telleth your greefe/ lefe he come adown
And haseth you/ and goth your way anon.
¶ Ey dere loue (qd she) O my dan John
Ful lefe me were this counsayle to hyde
But out it mote/ it may no lenger abyde.
¶ Y husbonde is to me the worste man
That euer was/ sythe the worlde began
But sythen I am a wyfe/ it sytte not to me
To telle no wight of our priuyte
Neyther in bedde/ ne in none other place
God shylde I shulde tel it for his grace
A wyfe ne shulde not say of her husbonde
But al honoure/ as I can understonde
Same vnto you/ thus moche tel I shall
As helpe me god/ he is nought worthe at all
In no degre/ the value of a fly
But yet me greueth most his nygardye
And wel ye wote/ that women naturally
Desyren thinges syxe/ as wel as I
They wolden that her husbondes shulde be
Hardy/ and wyse/ riche/ and therto fre
And buyxom to his wyfe/ and fers in bedde
But by that ilke lorde that for vs bledde
For his honoure/ my selfe to arraye
A sonday next/ I mote nedes paye
An hundred frankes/ or els am I lorne
Yet were me leuer that I were borne
Than me were done a shame or a vilanye
And if myn husbonde elles wyste it ayen ye
I nere but lorne/ and therfore I you pray
Lene me this some/ or els mote I dey
Dan John I say/ lene me this hundred frankes
Perde I wol not fayle your my thankes
By that ye lyste to do that I you pray
For at a terme yet I wol you pay
And if so be you wolde pleyen atte hasarde
That I may beye/ right as yt lyste hasarde

Than

And but I do/ god take on me vengeaunce
As foule as euer had Genilon of Frauncer.
¶ This gentil mōke answerd in this maner
Now we truly my owne lady dere
I shall (qd he) on you so great routhe
That I you swere/and plight my trouthe
That whā your husbōde is to Flaūdersfare
I wol delyuer you out of al this care
I wol bringe you an hundred frankes
And with that he caught her by the flankes
And her embraced harde/and kyssed her ofte
Gothe now we your way (qd he) al styl & softe
And let vs dyne as sone as euer ye may
For by my kalender it is prime of the day
Gothe now we/ & beth as true as I shal be.
Now we els god forbyd sir sayd she
And forthe she gothe/as soly as a pye
And bade the cokes that they shulde hem hye
So that men might dyne/and that anone
Vp to her husbonde is this wyfe gone
And knocked at his counter doze boldely.
Qui est la (qd he) Peter it am I
(Quod she) how we longe wol ye fast?
How we longe tyme wol ye reken and caste
Your sōmes/your bokes/& your thynges?
The deuel haue parte of al such reckenynges
Ye haue ynough (qd she) of goddes sonde
Come down to day/ & let your bagges stande
Ne be ye not a shamed/that dan John
Shal fastyng al this longe day gon?
What let vs go here masse and go dyne.
¶ Wyfe (qd this mā) lyst canst thou dispyne
The cursyous busynesse that we haue
For of chapmen/so god me saue
And by that lorde that called is seynt Iues
Herdly amonge twenty/ twelue shal thryue
Contynuelly/fastyng vnto thre nyght
We may wel make there a good vyage
And dyne forthe the whyle/as it may be
And kepe our estate in pryuyte
Tyl we be dede/ or els that we play
A pylgrimage/or goon out of the way
And therfore haue I great necessyte
Vpon this questyon wrongly to enquyre me
For comynge we were stonde in lorde
Of kepyng and forbarynge/ in our chapmanhode
To Flaūders wol I gone to morne in al hye
And come ayen as sone as euer I may
For whiche my dere wyfe/ I the beseke
As be to euery wight buxom and meke
And for to kepe our good be curysouse
And honestly gouerne wel our house
Thou hast ynough/in euery maner wyse
That to a thrifty housewyfe may suffyse
The lacketh none array/ne no vitayle
Of syluer in thy purse thou mayst wel fayle
And with ỳ worde/his countour doze he shette
And doun he gothe/no lenger wolde he lette
And hastely a masse was there ysayde
And ỳ pedely the tables were layde
And to dyner faste they hem spedde
And richly the chapman this monke fedde.
And after dyner/dan Johan soberly
This chapman toke a parte al prively
And sayd him thus/cosyn it stondeth so
That wel I se/to Bruges ye wol go
God and seynt Austyn spede you and gyde
I pray you cosyn/wysely that ye ryde
Gouerneth your also wel of your dyete
Al temperatly/and namely in this hete
Betwyxt vs two nedeth no straunge fare
Farwel cosyn/god shylde you fro care
If any thyng there be by day or by nyght
And it lye in my power or in my myght
That ye me wol cōmaunde in any wyse
It shal be done/right as ye wol deuyse
O thyng or that ye go/ if that it may be
I wolde pray you for to lene me
An hundred frankes/ for a weke or two
For certayne bestes/ that I mote nedes bye
To stare with a place that is ours
God helpe me so/ I wolde it were yours
I shal not fayle surely at my day
Not for a thousande frankes/a myle way
But let this thyng be secret/I you pray
For yet this night these bestes mote I bey
And fare as we wele/myn owne cosyn dere
Graunt mercy of your coste and your chere.
¶ This noble marchaunt/gentilly anon
Answerde and sayd/O cosyn dan John
Now me schamth/this is a smal requeste
My golde is yours/whan that you leste
And not only my golde/but my chaffare
Take what ye lyste/god shilde that ye spare
But one thyng is/ye knowe it wel ynough
Of chapmen/that ser money is ser plough

We may creaunce/whyle we haue a name
But goldelesse for to be it is a shame
Paye it ayen/ whan it lythe at your ese
After my might/sayne wolde I you plese.
¶ These hundred frankes/ set he forthe anon
And priuely he toke hem to dan Johan
No wight of this worlde/ wyste of this lone
Sauyng this marchaūt/ & dan Johan alone
They dronke & spake/ & rome a while and plen
Tyl that dan Johan rydeth to his abbey.
¶ The morow came/ & forth ryd this marchāt
To Flaūders warde/his prētes brought him
Tyl he came to Bruges/wel & merily (aūat
Nowe gothe this marchaunt/wel and besily
About his nedes/ & byeth/ and creaunseth
He neyther playeth at the dyce ne daunseth
But as a marchaunt/ shortly to tell
He ledde his lyfe/and there I let him dwell.
¶ The sonday next/ ỳ this marchāt was gon
To saynt Denys is comen dan John
With crowne & berde al fresshe & newe ishaue
In al this house/there nas so lytel a knaue
Ne no wight els/but he was ful fayne
For ỳ my lorde dan John was comen agayn
And shortly to the poynte for to gon
This sayde wyfe acordeth with dan John
That for these hūdred frākes he shuld al night
Haue her in his armes/bolte vpright
And this acorde parformed was in dede
In myrthe al nyght a besy lyfe they lede
Tyl it was day / ỳ dan Johan prēte his way
And bade the meyne farwel & haue good day
For none of hem/ ne no wyght in the toun
Had of dan Johan any suspection
And forthe he rydeth/ home to his abbey
Or where him lyste/ no more of him I sey.
¶ This marchaunt/ whan ended was ỳ faire
To saunte Denis he gan for to repaire
And with his wife he maketh feest & chere
And telleth her that the chaffare is so dere
That nedes muste he make a chevesaunce
For he was bounden in a recognisaunce
To pay twenty thousande shildes anon
For whiche this marchaunt is to Paris gon
To borowe of certayne frendes that he had
A certayne frankes/ & soune with him he lad
And whan he was comen in to the toun
For chertie and great affection
Vnto dan Johan he first gothe him to plen
Nought for to borowe of him no money
But for to wete and se of his welfare
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frendes done/ whan they ben mette in fere
Dan Johan him maketh feest & mery chere
And he him tolde ayen ful specially
Howe he had bought/ful wel and graciously
Thonked be god/al hole his marchaundise
Saue that he muste/in al manet wise
Abyen a chevesaunce/as for his beste
And than shulde he be in ioye and reste
Dan John answerd/certes I am right fayn
That ye in heale be comen home agayne
And if I were riche/as haue I blisse
Of twēty thousāde shildes shuld ye not misse
For ye so hyndely/this other day
Lent me golde/ and as I can and may
I thonke you/ by god and by saynt Jame
But natheles/ I toke it vnto our dame
Your wife at home/the same golde agayne
Vpon your benche/ she wote it wel certayne
By certayne tokens/ that I can her tell
Nowe by your leue/I may no lenger dwell
Our abbot wol out of this towne anon
And in his compayne I muste gon
Grete wel our dame/ myn owne nere swete
And farwele dere cosyn/ tyll we mete.
¶ This marchant that was ful ware & wyse
Creaunced hath/and eke payde in Paris
To certayne lombardes/ redy in her hondes
This sōme of golde/ & gate of hem the bondes
And home he gothe/as mery as a poppyngay
For wel he knewe he stode in suche aray
That nedes muste he wyn by that viage
A thousande frankes/ aboue al his costage.
¶ His wife ful redy met him at the gate
As she was wonte/ of olde vsage algate
And al that night in mirthe they be sette
For he was ryche/and clerely out of dette
Whā it was day/this marchant gan embrace
His wyfe al newe/ & kyssed her in her face
And vp he gothe/ & made it wonder tough
No more (qd she) by god ye haue ynough
And wantonly ayen with him she playde
Tyl at the laste this marchant thus sayde.
By god (qd he) I am a lytel wrothe
With you my wife/ al though it be me lothe

And

And wot ye why? by god as I gesse
For ye haue made a maner of straungenesse
Betwyxt me and my cosyn dan John
Ye shulde haue warned me/ or I had gon
That he had pou an hundred frankes payde
By vdy tokyn/ & selde him yuel apayde
For that I to him spake of cheuesaunce
The same so/as by his countenaunce
But natheles/by god our heuen kyng
I thought not to aske of him nothing
I pray the wife/ne do no more so
Tell me alway er that I fro the go
If any dettour/hath in myn absence
Ypayde the/lesse through thy negligence
I might him asse a thing that he hath payde.
¶ This wyfe was not a ferde ne affrayde
But boldely she said/and that anon
Mary I defye that false monke dan John
I kepe not of his tokens neuer a dele
He tolde me certayne golde/I wot it wele
What yuel thedom on his monkes snoute
For god it wote/I wende without doute
That he had yeue it me/bycause of pou
To don therwith myn honoure & my prow
For cosynage/and eke for belle chere
That he hath had ful often tymes here
But sythe I se it stonte in suche disioynte
I wol answere pou shortly to the poynte.
Ye haue no slacker dettours than am I
For I wol pay pou wel and redily
I to day to day/and yf so be I saye
I am pour wyfe/score it on my tayle
Or els I shal pay it as sone as euer I may
For by my trouth/I haue on myn aray
And not in waste/bestowed it euery dele
And for I haue bestowed it so wele
To pour honour/ for goddes sake I say
Be not wrothe/ but let be laughe & play
Ye shal my tolly body haue to wedde
By god I nyl not pay pou but a bedde
Forpeue it me/myn owne spouse dere
Turneth hitherwarde/and make better chere.
¶ This marchaunt sawe ther was no remedye
And for to chide/it was but a folye
Sithen that the thing may not amended be
Now wyfe he said/good I forgeue it the
But in thy lyfe/be no more so large
Kepe bet my good/this yeue I the in charge.

Thus endeth now we my tale/& god vs sende
Lasynge ynough/vnto our lyues ende.

¶ Here endeth the Shypmans tale/
and folowyth the wordes
of our hoste.

Wel said by corpus domini (qd our host)
Nowe longe mote thou saple by the coste
Thou gentil maister/ gentil marinere
God gyue ỳ mõke a thousãde last quad pere
A ha felowes/beware of suche a iape
The monke put in the marchãtes hode an ape
And in his wyues eke/by sayne Austyn
Draweth no monkes more in to your inne
But nowe passe ouer/& let vs se aboute
Who shal tel nowe first of al this route
An other tale/and with that worde he sayde
As curtesly/as it had ben a mayde.
¶ My lady prioresse/ by your leue
So that I wiste ỳ I shulde you not greue
I wol deme/that ye tellen shulde
A tale next/ if so be that ye wolde
Nowe wol ye vouchsafe/my lady dere
Gladly (qd she) and said in this manere.

¶ Here endeth the wordes of our
hoste/ & here begynneth the
Prioresses prologue.

DOmine dns noster: quã admirabile
est nomen tuũ in vniuersa terra.

Lorde our lord/ thy name how merueilous
Is in this wyde worlde ispradde (qd she)
For not only thy laude precious
Parfourmed is/ by men of dignyte
But by the mouth of children thy bounte
Parfourmed is/ for on the breest soukyng
Sometyme shewen they thyn heryng

Wherfore in laude/as I can best and may
Of the and of the white lilly floure
Whiche that the bare/& is a mayde alway
To telle a storie/I wol do my laboure
Nought that I may enarese her honoure
For she her selfe is honour and rote
Of bountie/next her sonne of soules bote

O mo

Mother mayden/ O mayden a mother free
O bussche brennynge/ whom Moyses sight
That rauyshedest downe fro the deyte
Through thyn humblesse/ the goost yn the light
Of whose vertue/ whan he yn thyn herte pight
Conceyued was the fadres sapyence
Helpe me to tell it yn thy presence

Lady thy bounte/ and thy magnyficence
Thy vertue and thy great humylyte
Ther may no tonge expresse/ in no science
For somtyme lady/ er men pray to the
Thou goest before/ of thy benygnyte
And getest vs the light/ through thy prayere
To gyden vs vnto thy sonne so dere

My connyng is to weake/ O blyssful quene
For to declare thy grete worthynesse
That I ne may the weyght/ susteene
But as a child of twelue monthe olde or lesse
That can vnnethes any worde expresse
Right so fare I/ and therfore I you pray
Gydeth my songe/ that I shal of you say.

Here endeth ỳ Prioresses prologue/ and here tolweth her tale.

Here was in Asye/ in a great cyte
Amonges cristen folke a iewyne
Sustayned by a lorde of that countre
For foule vsure/ and lucre of vilany
Hateful to Crist/ and to his company
And through the strete men might ride or wende
For it was free/ and open at euery ende

A lytel scole of cristen folke there stode
Down at the farther ende/ in which there were
Children an hepe/ comen of cristen blode
That learned in that scole/ yere by yere
Suche manere doctryne/ as men vsen here
This is to say/ to synge and to rede
As smale children don in her childhede

Amonges these children was a wedowes sone
A lytel clergion/ that. vii. yere was of age
That day by day to scole was his wone
And also ther/ where he sey the ymage
Of Cristes mother/ had he in vsage
As him was taught/ to knele a down and say
Ay Aue maria/ as he goth by the way

Thus hath this wedow/ her litel child ytaught
Our blyssed lady/ Cristes mother dere
To worshipe aye/ and he forgate it naught
For the ylke childe/ wolde al day soone lere
But ay/ whan I remembre me on this matere
Seynt Nicholas stondeth euer in my presence
For he so yonge to Crist dyd reuerence

This

This ytrle childe his ytrle book lernyng
As he sate in the schole at his prymere
He (Alma redemptoris mater) herde syng
As children lerned her antiphonere
And as he durst / he drough him ner and ner
And herkned to the wordes and the note
Tyl he the first verse cowth al by rote

Nought wist he what this latyn was to say
For he so yonge and tendre was of age
But on a day his felow gan he pray
To expowne him the song / in his langage
Or telle him why that songe was in vsage
This preyde he him to construe and declare
Ful ofte tyme / vpon his knees bare

His felow him answerde / thy dere mayster
Answerd him this / this song I haue herd say
For made of our blisful lady fre
Hir to reherse / and eke hir for to pray
To be our help & socoure whan we dey
I can no more expowne in this matere
I haue not lerned / I can but smal grammere

And is this songe ywrite in reuerence
Of Christes mother / sayd this innocent
Now certes I wil do my diligence
To conne it al or Christemasse be went
Though that I for my primer shal be shent
And shal be beten thryes in an houre
I wil it conne / our lady to honoure

His felawe taught him homwarde prively
Fro day to day / tyl he couthe it by rote
And then he song it wel and boldely
Fro worde to worde / according to the note
Twyes a day it passed through his throte
To schoolewarde / & homward whan he went
On Christes mother set was al his entent

As I haue sayd throughout the citee
This ytrle childe as he came to and fro
Ful merily than wolde he synge and crye
O Alma redemptoris mater / euer mo
The swetnesse hath his herte perced so
Of Christes mother / that to hir to pray
He can not stynte of syngyng by the way.

Our first foe the serpent Sathanas
That hath in wowes hertes his nestes
Vp swalt and seyde / O hebrike people alas
Is this a thyng to you that is honest
That swiche a boy shal walke as him lest
In your despyte / and synge of swiche sentēce
Whiche is ayenst your lawes reuerence.

From thence forth / the wowes han conspyred
This innocent out of this worlde to chase
An homicide therto han they hyred
That in an alley / had a priuy place
And as the childe gan forby to pace
This cursed wowe him caught / and hilde faste
And cutte his throte / & in a pytte him caste

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
Where that the wowes purged hir entrayles
O cursed folke / of herodes al newe
What may your yuel entent you auayle
Murther wol out / certes it wol not fayle
And namely ther ỳ honour of god shal sprede
The blode out crieth on your cursed dede

O martyr / sowded to virginite
Now maystow synge folowyng euer in oon
The whyte lambe celestial (quod he)
Of whiche the grete euangelist seynt Johan
In Pathmos wrote / whiche seyen ỳ they gon
Before the lambe / & synge a songe al newe
That neuer fleshly wommen they ne knewe.

This poure wydwe awaytith al ỳ nyght
After hir litel childe / and he came nought
For which as soone as it was day light
With face pale / for drede and busy thought
Hath at the schole / & elles where him sought
Til finally / she gan so farre espye
That he was last seyne in the citee

With mothers pyte / in hir brest enclosed
She goth as she were half out of hir mynde
To euery place / where she hath supposed
By lyklyhede hir childe for to fynde
And euer on Christes mother mylde she bynde
She cryed / and at last thus she wrought
Amonge the cursed wowes she him sought

She

She frayneth and she prayeth pitously
To euery Iewe that dwelleth in this place
To tellen her/ if her childe went there by
They sayd nay/ but Jesu of his grace
Gaue in her thought/ within a litel space
That in that place/ after her sonne she cryde
There he was cast/ in a pytte beside.

O great god/ that performyst thy laude
By mouthe of innocent/ lo here thy mayst
This wemme of chastyte/ this Emeraude
And eke of martyrdome the rubye bayst
There he with throte ycorue lay vpright
He (Alma redemptoris) gan to synge
So loude that al the place gan to ringe.

The christen folke/ that through the strete went
In comen/ for to wonder on this thyng
And hastely they for the prouoste sent
He came anon/ without tarying
And heryeth Christ/ that is of heuen kyng
And eke his mother/ honour of mankynde
And after that/ the Iewes let he bynde.

This childe with pytous lamentation
Was vp taken/ syngyng his songe alway
And with honoure/ and great procession
They caryen him to the nexte abbey
His mother swounyng by the bere lay
Vnneth might the people that were there
This newe Rachel bringe fro his bere

With turment & with shamful deth ilke one
This prouoste dothe these Iewes for to fynde
That of this murder wyste/ & that anone
He nolde no suche cursednesse obserue
Yuel shal he haue/ that yuell wol deserue
Therfore with wylde horse he dyd hem drawe
And after warde he honge hem by the lawe

Vpon his bere ape/ lythe this innocent
Before the chefe aulter/ whiles the masse laste
And after that/ the abbot with his couent
Hem spedde/ for to burye him als faste
And when they holy water on him caste
yet spake the child/ when spreint was holy water
And songe/ O Alma redemptoris mater.

This abbot/ which that was an holy man
As monkes ben/ or ellis ought to be
This yonge childe to conuert he began
And sayd: O dere childe/ I hayghte the
By vertue of the holy trinyte
Tel me what is thy cause for to synge
Sythens thy throte is corue to my seminge.

My throte is corue/ vnto my nekke bone
Sayd this childe/ and by way of kynde
I shulde haue deyed/ ye longe tyme agone
But Jesu Christ/ as ye in bokes fynde
Wol that his glorie last and be in mynde
And for the worship of the mother dere
Yet may I synge (O Alma) loude and clere

This well of mercy/ Christes mother swete
I loued al way/ as after my conning
And when that I my lyfe shulde forlete
To me she came/ and bade me for to synge
This antem verily my my dyeng
As ye han herde/ & when that I had songe
Me thought she layde a grayne vpon my tonge

Wherfore I synge/ and synge mote I certayne
In honoure of the blisful mayden free
Tyl fro my tonge/ of taken is the grayne
And after that/ thus she sayd to me
My lytel childe/ now wol I fetche the
When that the grayne is fro thy tonge ytake
Be not agaste/ I wol the not forsake.

This holy monke/ this abbot him mene I
His tong out caught/ & tok away the grayne
And he gaue vp the goste ful softly
And when this abbot had this wonder seyne
His salte teares trylled down as rayne
And grofle he fel al platte to the grounde
And stil he lay/ as he had ben ybounde

The couent lay eke vpon the pauement
Weping and herying Christes mother dere
And after that they ryseu/ & forthe ben went
And tok away this martyr fro the bere
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his tyteł body swete
There he is now/ god leue vs for to mete.

O yonge

Dongst hewe of Ipocrys slayne also
Mahoun cursed wrecch as it is notable
For it is but a fytte while ago
Pray we for vs / we synfull folke vnstable
That of his mercy god be merciable
On vs / his great mercy multiplye
For the reuerence of his mother Mary.

¶ Here endeth the Prioresse tale. And here folowe the wordes of the Host to Chaucer.

Han said was this myracle / every man
As sobre was / as wonder was to se
Tyl that our hoste to japen began
And than at erste / he loked vpon me
And said thus: what man arte thou (quod he)
Thou lokest / as thou woldest fynde an hare
For ever vpon the grounde I se the stare

Approche nere / and loke vp merily
Now ware you sirs / I let this man haue place
He in the waste is shapen as wel as I
This were a popet in armes to embrace
For any woman / small and fayre of face
He semeth elvyssh by his countenaunce
For vnto no wight dothe he daliaunce

Say now somwhat / sithen other folke han said
Tel vs a tale of mirthe / and that anon
Hoste (quod he) ne be not vnkel apayde
For other tale certes can I none
But of a ryme / I lerned yore agone
Ye that is good (quod he) we shullen it here
Now dayntie thing / me thinketh by thy chere.

¶ Here endeth the wordes of the Host and here folowe the ryme of sir Thopas.

Herken lordynges in good intent
And I wol tell verament
Of mirthe and of solas
Al of a knight was fayre and gent
In batayle and in turnament
His name was sir Thopas.
Ybore he was in ferre countre
In Flaundres / al-beyonde the se
At Poperyng in the place.

His father was a man ful fre
And a lorde he was of that countre
As it was goddes grace.
Sir Thopas was a bouncyng swayne
Whyte was his fayr as payne mayne
His lyppes rede as rose
His rudde is lyke scarlet in graine
And I you tell in good certayne
He had a semely nose.
His heer / his berde was lyke safroun
That to his girdel raught adoun
His shone of cordewane.
Of Bruges were his hosen broun
His robe was of ceklatoun
That coste many a iane.
He couthe hunte at the wylde dere
And ryde an haukyng for by the ryuere
With grey goshauke on honde
Therto he was a good archere
Of wrastlyng was there none his pere
There any man shulde stonde.
Ful many a mayde bright in boure
They mourne for him paramoure
Whan hem were bet to slepe.
But he was chaste / and no lechoure
And swete as is the bramble floure
That beareth the reed hype.
And so byfell vpon a day
Forsothe / as I you tel may
Sir Thopas wolde out ryde
He worthe vpon his stede gray
And in his honde a launce gay
A longe swerde by his syde.
He pricketh thorowe a fayre forestе
Therin was many a wylde beest
Ye bothe buck and hare.
And as he pricketh northe and este
I tel you / him had almeste
Betydde a foule care.
There springen herbes great and smale
The lycorys and the setuale
And many a clowe gelofer
And nutmygges / to put in ale
Whether it be new or stale
Or for to lye in cofer.
The bridres synge / it is no nay
The sperhauke and the poppyngay
That ioy it was to here.

The

The throstell ebe made his lay
The wodcocke vpon the spray
She song ful loude and clere.
¶ Sir Thopas fyl in loue longyng
And whan he herde the throstel syng
he pucked as he were wode
His faire stede in his pucksyng
So swette/ that men might hym wryng
His spdes were al blode.
¶ Sir Thopas ebe so wery was
For pucksyng on the softe gras
So fiers was his corage
That doun he layde hym in that place
To maken his stede some solace
And gaue hym good forage.
¶ Oh/ saynt Mary/ benedicite
What ayleth this loue at me
To bynde me so sore:
Me dremed al this nyght parde
An elfe quene shal my lemman be
And slepe vnder my gore.
¶ An Elfe quene wol I loue ywis
For in this worlde no woman is
Worthy to be my make in towne
Al other women I forsake
And to an Elfe quene I me betake
By dale and ebe by downe.
¶ In to his sadel he clombe anone
And pucketh ouer style and stone
An Elfe quene for to espye
Tyl he so longe hath ridden and gon
That he fonde in a prine wone
The countre of Fayne. So wylde
For in that countre nas there non
Neither wyfe ne childe
Tyl him there came a great Giaunt
His name was called sir Olyphaunt
A perylous man of dede.
He said childe/ by Termagaunt
But if thou pucke out of my haunt
Anon pflee thy steed with mace
Or euer I go out of this place
¶ Here is the quene of Fayry
With harpe and pipe/ and symphony
Dwellyng in this place.
The childe said/ als so mote I the
To morowe wol I meten the
Whan I haue myne armure.
And yet I hope par ma foye.
That thou shalte wath this launce ley
Aboen at ful sore: Though thy mayne
Shal I perce/ if I moye
Yet it be fully prime of the daye
For here thou shalt be slawe.
Sir Thopas dro we abacke ful faste
This gyaunt at him stones caste
Out of a sell staffe slynge
But fayre escaped sir Thopace
And al was through goddes grace
And thorowe his fayre berynge.
¶ yet lyssneth lordynges to my tale
Meryer than the nightyngale
For now I wol yow towne
How sir Thopas/ with spdes smale
Pucksyng ouer downe and dale
Is comen ayen to towne.
His merry men comaunded he
To maken hym bothe game and gle
For nedes muste he fyght
With a gyaunt/ with heedes thre
For paramoures and iolyte
Of one that shone full bright.
Do come he sayd my mynstrales
And iestours/ for to tellen vs tales
Anon in myn armyng
Of romaunces that ben royale
Of popes and of cardynale
And ebe of loue longyng.
They sette hym first the swete wyne
And mede ebe in a mazelyne
And royal spycerye
Of gynger breed that was ful fyne
Of lycores and ebe comyne
With sugre that is trye.
He dyd nepte his whyte lere
Of clothe of lake fyne and clere
A brecbe and ebe a sherte.
And nept his sherte an habergon
And ouer that an habergeon
For perryng of his herte.
And ouer that a fyne hauberke
Was al ywrought of ryuen werke
Full stronge it was of plate
And ouer that his cote armoure
As whyte as is the lylly floure
In whiche he wolde debate.

his

His shylde was al of golde so red
And therin was a bores hed
A carbocle by his syde.
And there he swore on ale and bred
How that the gyaunt shulde be ded
Betyde what betyde.
His iambeux were of cure bely
His swerdes shethe of yuore
His helme of latoun bright
His sadel was of rede golde
His bridel as the sonne shone
Or as the mone light
His spere was of fyne cypres
That bydeth water/ as nothing pres
The hed ful sharpe ygrounde
His stede was al dapped gray
He gothe an amblyng vp the way
Ful softely and rounde in londe.
Lo lordes myn/here is a fyt
If ye wol any more of it
To tellen it wol I fonde.
Nowe holde your mouthe for charite
Bothe knight and lady fre
And herkneth to my spell
Of batayle and of chyualrye
And of ladyes lowe dyspy
Anon I wol you tel.
Why spekest of Romaunces of pris
Of Horne childe/ and of Ypotys
Of Bevys/ and of sir Gy
Of sir Lybeaux/ and Playndamour
But sir Thopas/ he bereth the flour
Of veray chyualrye.
His good stede he bestrode
And forthe vpon his way glode
As sparke out of the bronde.
Vpon his creste he bare a toure
And therin stycked a lily flour
God shylde his cors fro shonde
And for he was a knight auentrous
He nolde slepen in none house
But spredde his hed.
His bright helme was his wanger
And by him fedde his destrer
Of herbes fyne and good
Him selfe dronke water of the well
As dyd the knight sir Perfyual
So worthy vnder wede.

¶ Here endeth the ryme of sir Thopas and begynneth ye wordes of our host.

No more of this for goddes dygnyte
(Qd̄ our hoste) for thou makest me
So wery of thy very lewednesse
That alle ye spylle my herynge bones
Myn eres aken of thy drasty speche
Now syrs quod I/ let me telle the dyuel I beteche
This may wel be rerde ryme dogerel (qd he)
Why so (qd I) why wolte thou lette me
More of my tale/ than any other man
Sens that it is the beste ryme I can?
By god (qd he) playnly at o worde
Thy drasty rymyng is not worthe a corde
Thou doest nought els but spendest tyme
Sir at one worde/ thou shalt no lenger ryme
Let se whether thou canste tel ought in gest
Or tel in prose somwhat at the lest
In which there may be some myrth or doctryne
Gladly (qd I) by goddes swete pyne
I wol you tel a lytel thyng in prose
That ought lyke you/ as I suppose
Or elles ye be cursed dangerous
It is a moralle tale vertuous
Al be it told somtyme by sondrie wyse
Of sondrie folke/ as I shal you deuyse
As thus/ ye wote that every euangelyst
That telleth vs the payne of Iesu Crist
Ne sayth not al thyng as his felawe dothe
But nathelesse her sentence is al sothe
And al accordeth in her sentence
Al be there in her tellyng difference
For some of hem sayne more/ & some lesse
What they hir pyteous passyon expresse
I meane of Marke/ Matheu/ Luke/ & Johan
But doutelesse her sentence is al on
Therfore lordynges/ I you beseche
If that ye thynke I varye in my speche
As thus/ though I tel somwhat more
Of prouerbes/ than ye han herde byfore
Comprehended in this lytel treatyse here
To enforcen with the effect of my matere
And though I not the same wordes sayn
As ye han herde/ yet to al you I prayn
Blameth me not/ for in my sentence
Shal ye not fynde moche dyfference
Fro the sentence of this tretes lyte

After the whiche/this mery tale I write
And therfore herkeneth/what I shal say
And let me tell my tale I you pray.

¶ Here endeth the wordes of our hoste/ and here begynneth Chaucers tale of Melibeus.

A Yonge man called Melibeus/ mighty & ryche/ begate vpon his wife that called was Prudence/a doughter whiche that called was Sophye. ¶ Upon a daye byfell that he for his disporte is went into the feldes him to playe: His wyfe and eke his doughter hath he lefte within his house/ of whiche the dores were fast ishette. Foure of his olde foes han it aspide/ and setten ladders to the walles of his house/and by ꝑ windowes ben entred/ and bete his wyfe/ and wounded his doughter with fyue mortall woundes/ in fyue sondry places: That is to say/in her fete/in her handes/in her eares/ in her nose/& in her mouthe/ and lefte her for dead/and wenten hir waye.

Whan Melibeus retourned was in to his house/and se all this mischefe/he like a madde man rentyng his clothes/ gan to wepe & crye.

Prudence his wyfe/as ferforth as she durste besought him of his wepyng for to stynte: But not for thy he gan to wepe and crye ouer lenger the more. ¶ Than noble wife Prudence remembred hir vpon the sentence of Ouyde in his boke that clepeth the remedye of loue/ where as he sayth/ he is a foole that bisoureth the mother to wepe in ꝑ deth of her childe/ tyl she hath wept her fyll/ as for a certayne tyme: and than that a man doue his diligence with amyable wordes to recomforte and praye her of her wepyng for to stynte. For whiche reson this noble wyfe Prudence/ suffred her husbonde to wepe and crye/ as for a certayne space: and whan she sawe her tyme/ she sayd him in this wyse. Alas my lorde (q̄ she) why make ye your selfe for to be lyke a foole: for sothe it appertayneth not vnto a wyse man to make suche a sorowe. your doughter w̄ the grace of god/ shal warysshe & escape. And al were it so that she right na we were dede/ ye ne ought not as for her dethe ouer mesure sorowe. Senek sayth/ ꝑ wyse man shal not take to gre desconforte for the dethe of his children/ but certes he shulde suffre it in pacience/ as wel as he abydeth the dethe of his owne proper persone. ¶ This Melibeus answerde anon and sayd: What man (q̄ he) shulde of his wepyng stynte that hath so great a cause for to wepe? Jesus him selfe our lorde/ wepte for the dethe of Lazarus his frende. Prudence answerd/ certayn wel I wote a temperate wepyng is not forbode ne defended to him ꝑ is sorouful amonge folke in sorow/but it is rather graunted him to wepe. The apostel Poule vnto ꝑ Romans writeth: men shulde reioyce w̄ hem that maketh ioye/ and wepe with suche folke as wepen. But though a temperate wepyng be graunted/ certes outrageous wepyng is defended. Mesure of wepyng shulde be cōsydered after ꝑ losse that is befallen. Senek. Whan ꝑ thy frende is dede (q̄ he) let not thyn eyen to moiste ben of terres/ for to make hir dure: although terres ramoy to thyn eyen let hem not fall. And whan thou hast forgon thy frende/ do diligence to gete a newe frende: and this is more wisdom than for to wepe for thy frende whiche thou hast lorne/ for therof is no bote. And therfore if ye gouerne you by reason/put away fro you out of your herte/ sorowe and wilnesse you that Jesus Syrak sayth/ a man that is ioyous and glad in herte/ it him conserueth flourissyng in the age: but certayn sorouful hert maketh him hastely olde. He sayth eke thus/that sorowe in herte slayth ful many a man. Salomon sayth/ ꝑ right as moughtes in the shepes fleyle anoyeth the shepe/ and the smoke wemmes the yen/ right so anoyeth sorowe ꝑ hert of man/wherfore we ought as wel in the deth of our children/ as in the losse of our temporal goodes sorowe attemprely.

Remembre you vpon patient Job/ whan he had lefte his children and his temporal substance/ and in his body enbrowded and ouerspred with many a grieuous apostemacion/ put fro his wife whan she bad him that he shulde yet speke vnto her/ or she wolde passe fro him/ he sayde to her thus: Wherto speke we suche wordes/ we abyde of the hande of god ryght wel to receyue bothe good and harme/ for certes he was right wel at ease that god vouchesafe to be the nurse of our herte.

To this forsayd thinges Melibeus lorde of the wife Prudence answerde in thy manere (q̄ he)

ly true/ & therto profytable/ but truely my
hert is troubled wt thys sodayne so greuously/
that I not what to do. Let me (o3 Dame) se
your true frendes at thy lyuage/ which þ ben
wyse/ & tellith to ben your cause/ and herkenith
what they say in thyn sayling/ & gouerne you
after her sentence. Salomon sayth/ werke al
thy thinges by counsaile/ & thou shalte neuer
rue. Thou by counsaile of this wyfe Prudence/
this Melibeus let cause a great congregation
of people/ as surgeons/ phisitions/ olde folke
and yonge/ & take of the olde enemyes errour-
ably (as by her sentence) to the sone and to
the grace: And therwithal there came some of
his neyghbours/ that bad him vengeance and
warre anon/ and not delay. There came
also ful many subtyl flatterers/ & wise
aduocates learned in the lawe. And when these
olde folke togyders assembled were/ this Melibeus
a sorowful wyse herlond here his cause/ and by
maner of his speche/ it semed þ in herte he
bare a cruel pursuyte to ben vengeance upon
his foes/ & feruently he bespake þ warre shulde
begyn. But nathelesse yet asked he counsayle
here this matter. A surgyen by profession and
elect of suche as were wyse by rede/ & lowe
Melibeus sadde as ye shal here.

Sire (o3 he) as to þ touchyng of your hoole
wyll be it so that resonably for to worchen/
we shal be in doubte before/ for to ben wyse
that werre þ ye ben of gode for that ben gode and
profytable/ or none or no perfyte. Almost right
as the same wyse the physicions answered some
that they sayden a sone wolde make: that
wyll or nyll men he by necessite must
wyll to that same. Sire by your
sorowfulness ful of vengeance the second fol-
we that your counsaile/ and the Philosopher
makith mention of warrayes & enquerith and
demandith counsayle of three maner of peoples

greatly thestate of might/ of power/ of richesse
and of frendes/ despysing the power of his ad
uersaries: and sayd plainly/ þ he anon shulde
wreken him on his foes/ and begyn werre.

Up rose than an auncyent man & wyse/ by
name y by counsayle of other þ were wyse/ and
sayd: Ye sire for the whiche we ben assembled
in this place/ is ful heuy thing/ & a grete matere
because of the wronge and of the vnrighwysnesse
that hath be don/ and eke by reson of grete da-
mages that in tyme cõmynge ben possible to
fallen for the same/ & eke by reson of the great
richesse & power of the parties bothe/ for the
whiche resons it were a ful great peryll to en-
tre in this matere. Wherfore Melibeus thou as
our sentence/ we cõsayle you aboue all thyg/
that right anon thou do thy diligence in kep-
yng of thy propre person/ in such a wyse that
thou ne want none espye ne watche/ thy body
for to saue: And after that we cõsayle that in
thyn house thou set sufficyent garrysons/ so
they may as wel thy body as thy house besyde:
but certes to mouen werre/ or to ben sodenly
vengeaunce/ we may not deme in so hyed tyme
that it were profytable/ wherfore we after ley-
ser & space to haue deliberacion in this cause to
deme/ for the comun prouerbe sayth thus: he
that sone demeth sone shal repent. And eke many
sayen/ that hasty man ne wyse man soone vnder-
stondeth a matere/ & ingreth by leyser: for al be
it tarying be nayful/ algate it is not to be re-
puted in peryous of vengeaunce/ ne in hastyf
vengeaunce taking/ where it is sufficyent & resonable.
And þ semeth our lorde Jesu Christ by en
sample/ for whom þ many wold take vengeaunce
of many a wroo brought/ ful pacient he abode
what shulde be don of her person/ al be it þ he
wyst wel how sone he wolde ansuere/ yet
he wolde he not answere sodenly/ but he wolde
haue deliberacion/ & in the grounde he wrote
twyes/ & by this cause we of hym deliberacion:
and we shal thus by the grace of god coun-
sayle you þ thing that shal be profytable.

Up sterte than the yonge folke at ones/ & the
moste part of þ cõpany gane scorne this olde
wyse/ & began to make noyse & sayde. Right
as we wolde þ yong in seson myght suffer
myght so many sykenes hastyly for hunger/ whiche

Rede that

that they ben fresshe & newe/ and eche loude bone they cryed/ werre werre. Up rose tho one of the olde wise/ & with his honde made coūte-naunce ꝑ they shulde holden hem styl & pesen hun and pesen. Lordynges (qd he) ther is ful many a man that cryeth werre werre/ ꝑ wote ful lyte what werre amounteth. Werre at his begynnyng hath so great an entryng and so large/ that euery wight may entre when hem lyketh/ & lightly fynde werre: but certes what ende therof shal fal/ it is not lightly to knowe. When that werre is ones bygon/ there is full many a childe vnborne of his mother/ ꝑ shal sterue ponge because of thilke werre/ other elles lyue in sorowe/ or dye in wretchydnesse: And therfore or ꝑ any werre be bygon/ men muste haue great counsayle & good deliberacion. And when this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by reson/ wel nye al at ones bygon for to ryse for to breken his tale/ & bydden hun ful ofte his wordes for to abregge: For certes he that precheth to hem that list not to here his wordes/ his sermon hem anoyeth. For Jesus Sirake sayth/ ꝑ wepyng in musyke is a noyous thing. This is as moche to say/ as moche auayleth it to speke byforne folke to whiche his speche anoyeth/ as it is for to syngen byforne hem that wepe. And when this wyse man sawe ꝑ hun wanted audience/ al shamfast he set hun adown ayen. For Salomon sayth. There as thou mayste not haue audyence/ enforce ꝑ not to speke. I se wel (qd this wyse man) that the comen prouerbe is soth/ ꝑ good counsayle wanteth/ when it is moste nede.

yet had this Melibeus in his counsayle many folke/ that priuely in his eere counsailed hun certayne thinges/ & counsayled him the contrary in general audience. When Melibeus had herde that the greatest parte of his counsaile were accorded that he shulde make werre/ anon he consented to her counsayling/ & fully affirmed her sentence. Than dame Prudence/ when ꝑ she sawe her husbonde shope hun for to awreke him on his enemies/ & to begyn werre: she in ful humble wise/ when she sawe her tyme said to him these wordes. My lord (qd she) I you beseche as hertely as I dare or can/ nat hastie you not to faste/ and for al guerdons pese me audience. For Peter Alphons sayth. Who so hath to the good or harme/ haste the not to quite it/ for in this wyse thy frende wol abyde/ and thyn enemy shal the longer lyue in sorowe. The prouerbe sayth/ he hasteth wel ꝑ wisely can abyde: And in wicked haste is no profyte.

This Melibeus answerd to his wife Prudence. I purpose not (qd he) to werke by thy counsaile/ for many causes & resons/ for certes alle thy wight wolde holde me than a fole. Alle-to say/ if I for thy counsayling wolde chaunge thinges that ben ordayned and affirmed by so many wise. Secondly/ I say that al women ben wicked/ & none good of hem al. For of a thousande men saith Salomon/ I fonde a good man: but certes of al women fonde I neuer non. And also certes/ if I governed me by thy counsayle/ it shuld seme that I had put the ouer me ꝑ maistry: & god forbyd that it so were. For Jesus Sirake saith/ that if ꝑ wife haue maystrye/ she is contrarious to her husbonde. And Salomon sayth. Neuer in thy lyf to thy wyfe/ ne to thy childe/ ne to thy frende/ ne yeue no power ouer thy self/ for better it were that thy children aske of thy thinges that hem nedeth/ than thy selfe to be in the handes of thy children. And also if I wol werche by thy counsaile/ certes my counsayle must be sothly secre tyl it were tyme that it must be knowen: and this ne may not be/ if I shuld be counsayled by the. Whan dame Prudence sul debonairly and with gret patience/ had herde al that hir husbonde lyked for to say/ than asked she of him leyserne for to speke/ & sayd in this wyse. My lorde (qd she) as to your first reson/ it may lightly ben answerd. For I say that it is no folye to chaunge counsayle/ when the thinges chaunged/ or elles when ꝑ thing semeth otherwise thn it semed afore. And more ouer I say/ though that ye haue sworne & behyght to performe your emprise/ and ꝑ iuste cause ye do it not: men shuld not say therfore ye were yfere & forswoin. For ꝑ bolde saith/ that ꝑ wise man maketh no lesynge/ when he turneth his corage for ꝑ better. And al be it that your emprise be establissed & ordeyned by gret multitude of folke/ yet dare you not accomplisse thilke ordynaunce but yon sykath: for ꝑ trewe

of thinges and the profyte ben rather foldem
in fewe folke that ben wyse and ful of reson/
than by great multitude of folke/ there euery
man cryeth and clatereth what him lyketh:
fully suche multitude is not honest. And as
to the seconde reson/ where as ye saye/ that all
women ben wicked: saue your grace. Certes
ye blame al women in this wyse/ and he that
blameth/ as saythe the boke/ al displeaseth.
Lod Senecke saythe/ that who so wol haue
frendes/ shal no man dispraise/ but he shal
gladly teche the science that he can/ without
presumpcion or pride: and suche thinges as
he ought ne can/ he shal not ben ashamed to
lerne hem/ and to enquire of lesse folke than
him selfe. And þ there hath ben many a good
woman/ may lightely be proued: For certes sir
our lorde Jesu Christ nolde neuer han descen-
ded to be borne of a woman/ if al women had
ben wicked. And after that/ for the great bonte
that in women/ our lorde Jesu Christ/ whan
he was ryssen fro dethe to lyfe/ apered rather
to a woman than to his apostels. And though
that Salomon sayde/ he founde neuer wo-
man good/ it folowth not therfore that al wo
men be wicked: for though that he ne founde
no good woman/ certes many an other man
hath founde many a woman ful good and
trwe. Per chs parauenture the entent of Sa-
lomon was this/ that in fourtrayne bontie he
founde no woman/ this is to say: that there is
no wight that hath parfyte bountie saue god
alone/ as he him selfe recordeth in his euan-
gelie. For there nys no creature so good that
him ne wanteth somwhat of the perfection of
god that is his maker. Your therde reson as
this/ ye say that if that ye gouerne you by my
counsayle/ it shulde seme that ye had yeue me
the maistry and the lordshyp of your person.
But saue your grace it is not so/ for if so were
that no man shulde be counsayled but only
of him that hath lordshyp and maistrye of his
person/ man nolde not be counsayled so ofte.
For soothly thelke man that asketh counsayle of
a purpose/ yet hath he fre wyl whether he wol
ouerbe after that counsayle or non. And as to your
fourthe reson/ where as ye sayen that the con-
seyll of women can hyde thinges that they
wot not/ as who saith/ that a woman can not
hyde that she wote. Sir/ these wordes ben vn-
derstonde of women that ben tangleres & gos-
sibes/ of whiche women men sayne þ thus thin-
ges dunen a man out of his house/ that is to
say/ smoke/ dropppynge of rayne/ and wicked
wyues. And of such women Salomon saith/
that a man were better dwell in deserte/ than
with a woman þ is riottous. And sir by your
leaue it am not I/ for ye haue ful ofte assayde
my great silence and my great patience/ and
eke how wel that I can hyde & heale thinges
that men ought to secretly to hyden. And soth
sy as to your fyfte reson/ where as ye say that
in wicked counsayle women venquisshe men:
God wote that thilke reson stante here in no
stede: for vnderstonden/ nowe ye assay coun
sayle for to do wickednesse: And if ye wolde
werken wickednesse/ and your wyfe restrayn-
eth thilke wicked purpose/ & ouerrome you
by reson and by good counsayle/ certes your
wife ought rather to be prayised than blamed.
Thus shulde ye vnderstonde the philosopher
that sayth/ in wicked counsayle women venq-
uisshe her husbondes. And ther as ye blame
al women and her resons/ I shal shewe you
by many ensamples that many women haue
be ful good/ and yet ben/ & her counsaile hol-
some and profitable. Eke some men han said
that the counsayle of women is eyther to dere/
or to lytel worthe. But al be it so that ful ma-
ny women be badde/ & her counsaile vile and
nought worthe/ yet han men founde ful many
a good woman/ & ful discrete & wyse in coun-
saylyng. To Jacob through the counsaile of
his mother Rebecke/ wan þ benyson of his fa
ther/ & the lordship of al his brethern. Judeth
through her good counsayle/ delyuered þ cite of
Bethule/ in whiche she dwelt/ out of þ honde
of Holofern þ had it al besieged/ & wolde haue
distroyed it. Abygayle delyuered Nabalt her
husbond fro Dauid þ king/ þ wold haue slayn
him/ & apeased the yre of the king by her wyte
and by her good counsel. Hester by her counsell
enhaunsed greatly the people of god in þ regne
of Assuerus the kyng. And the same bountie
in good counsayling of many a good woman
may me rede & tell. And furthermore lyke that

Rrrr iij ouer

our lorde had created Adam our former father/he said in this wyse: It is not good to be a man alone: make we an helper to him selfe semblable. Here maye ye se that if that women were not good/& her counsaile good and profytable/ our lorde god of heuen ne wolde neyther han wrought hem/ ne called hem the helper of man/ but rather confusion to man.

And there sayd a clerke ones in two verses. What is better than golde? Jasper. What is better than Jasper? wysdome. And what is better than wysdom? woman. And what is better than a good woman? Ys a good man. And what is better thā a good man? nothig. And sir/by many other reasons may ye sene/ that many women ben good/and eke her counsayle good and profytable. And therfore sir/ if that ye wol truste to my counsayle/ I shal restore you your doughter hole and sounde/ and eke that I wol do you so moche/ that ye shal haue honoure in this case.

Whan Melybe had herde the wordes of his wyse prudence/ he said thus. I se wel that the wordes of Salomon be soth. For he sauth/the wordes that be spoken discretly by ordynaūce ben honycombes/ for they yeuen swetnesse to the soule/ and holsomnesse to the body. And wyse by cause of thy swete wordes/ and eke for I haue proued and assayed thy great sapyence and thy great trouthe: I wol gouerne me by thy counsayle in al thing.

¶ Now sir (qd dame Prudence) and sythens that ye vouchsafe to be gouerned by my counsayle/ I wol enforme you howe that ye shal gouerne your selfe in chosyng of your counsaylours. Ye shal first in al your werke meke ly beseechynge to the hye god that he wolde be your counsaylour/ and shapeth you to suche entent that he yeue you counsayle & comforte/ as taught Thobye his sonne. At al tymes thou shalte blisse god/ and praye him to dresse thy wayes/ and loke eke that thy counsayles ben in him euer more. Saynt James sayth/ if any man of you haue nede of sapience/aske it of god. And afterwarde/ than shullen ye take counsayle in your selfe/ & examyne well your owne thoughtes/ of suche thynges as you thynketh that ben beste for your profyte. And than shal ye drawe fro your hert thynges that be contraryous to good counsayle: that is to saye/ ire/ couetyse/ and hastynesse.

¶ First he that asketh counsaile of him selfe/ certes he must be withouten yre and wrath in him selfe/for many causes. The first is this: He that hath great ire and wrathe in him selfe he weneth alway that he may do thynge that he may not do. And secondly/he that is proud and wrothful/ he may not wel deme: And he that may not wel deme/may not wel counsel. The thirde is this/he that is proud and wroth/ as sayth Seneke/ may not speke but blamefull thinges/ and with thilke vycious wordes he stireth other folke to angre & to yre. And eke sir ye muste drawe couetyse out of your herte. For the apostell sayth/that couetyse is the rote of al harmes. And trusteth right wel that a couetous mā ne can not deme ne thynke but onely to fulfyll the ende of his couetyse: and certes that ne may neuer be accōplissheth/ for euermore/ the more habundaunce that he hath of richesses/ the more he desyreth. And sir ye muste also drawe out of your herte hastynesse: for certes ye may not deme for the beste a sodayne thought that falleth in your herte/ but ye muste auyse you on it ful ofte: for as ye haue herde here byfore/ the comen prouerbe is this. He that sone demeth/ sone repenteth.

Sir/ ye ne be not alway lyke disposed/ for certes some thing that semeth somtyme to you that is good for to do/ an other tyme it semeth to you the contrarye.

And whan ye han taken counsayle in your selfe/ & han demed by good deliberacion suche thynge as you semeth beste/ than rede I you that ye kepe it secrete. Discouere ye not your counsayle to no person/but if so be that ye wene sikerly that through your bewrayeng/ your condycion shal be to you the more profytable. For Jhesus Sirake sayth: neyther to thy sone ne to thy frende discouer not thy secret/ ne thy folye: for they wol yeue you audyence and scorne you in yo^r absēce. Another clerke saith/ that scarsly shalt you fynde any person that may kepe counsaile secretly. The boke sayth/ while that thou kepest thy counsayle in thyn herte/

thou

thou kepest it in thy prison: and whan thou bewrayest thy counsayle to any wight/ he holdeth the in his snare. And therfore you is better to hyde your counsayle in your herte/ than to pray hym to whom ye haue bewrayed your counsaile/ that he wol kepe it close styll. For Seneca sayth: If so be that thou mayst not thyn owne counsayle hyde/ howe darste thou pray any other wight thy counsayle secrete to kepe. But nathelesse if thou were sikerly that the bewrayeng of thy counsayle to a person wol make thy condycion stonde in the better plight/ than shalte thou tel hym thy counsayle in this wyse. First thou shalte make no semblante whether the were leuer peace or warre/ or this or that/ ne shewe hym not thy wyll ne thyn entent: for trustе wel that comenly these counsaylours ben flatterers/ namely the counsayers of great lordes/ for they enforce hem alwaye rather to speke plesaunt wordes/ enclyning to the lordes lustе/ than wordes that ben trewe or profytable/ and therfore may say that the riche man hath selde good counsayle but if he haue it of hym selfe. And after that thou shalt consyder thy frendes and thyn enemyes. And as touchynge thy frendes/ thou shalt consyder whiche of hem ben most sayth-full and moste wyse/ and eldest/ and most approued in counsaylynge: and of hem shalte thou aske thy counsayle/ as the case requireth.

I say/ that first ye shal cal to your counsaile your frendes that ben trewe. For Salomon sayth: that right as the herte of a man delyth in sauoure that is sote/ right so the counsayle of trewe frendes yeueth swetnesse to the soule. And he sayth also/ there may nothyng be lykened to the true frende: For certes golde ne syluer be not so moche worthe as the good wyl of a trewe frende. And also he sayth that a trewe frende is a stronge defence/ who so that it fyndeth hath a great treasure. Than shal ye also consyder if that your trewe frendes be discrete and wyse: for the boke sayth/ aske alway thy counsayle of them that ben wyse. And by this same reason shal ye cal to your counsaile your frendes that ben of age/ suche as haue seen and ben expert in many thinges/ and ben approued in counsayling. For the boke sayth/ that in olde men is sapience/ and in longe tyme the prudence. And Tullius sayth/ that great thinges ben not aye accomplysshed by strength ne by delyuernesse of body/ but by counsayle/ by auctorite of persones/ and by science: the whiche thre thynges ne ben not feeble by age/ but certes they enforce & encrease day by day. and than shal ye kepe this for a general rule. First shal ye call to your counsayle a fewe of your frendes that ben especial. For Salomon sayth/ many frendes haue thou/ but amonge a thousande chose the one to be thy counsellour: for al be it so that thou first ne tel thy counsayle but to a fewe/ thou mayste afterwarde tel it to mo folke if it be nede. But loke alway that thy counsayleres haue those condycions that I haue sayd before/ that is to saye/ that they be trewe/ wyse/ & of olde experience. And werke not alway in euery nede by one counsayler alone: for somtyme behoueth it to be counsayled by many. For Salomon sayth/ saluacion of thinges is where as there be many counsayers.

¶ Nowe haue I tolde you of whiche folke ye shal be counsailed: Nowe wol I tel you which counsayle ye ought to eschue. First ye shal eschue the counsaylynge of fooles. Salomon sayth/ take no counsayle of a foole/ for he wol counsayle but after his owne lust and his affection. The boke sayth/ that the propertie of a foole is this: He troweth lightly harme of euery man/ and lightly troweth al bountie in him selfe. Thou shalt eschue the counsayling of al flatterers/ whiche as enforcen hem rather to prayse your persone by flattery/ than for to tel you the soth & fastnesse of thynges. Wherfore/ Tullius sayth/ amonge al the pestilence that ben in frendship/ the greatest is flaterye. And therfore it is more nede þ thou eschue & drede flatterers/ thā any other people. The boke sayth/ thou shalt rather flee fro the swete wordes of flatering and praysing/ than fro the egre wordes of thy frendes that sayth the sothes. Salomon sayth/ that the wordes of a flatterer is a snare to catche innocent. He sayth also/ he that spreth to his frende wordes of flattery & of plesaunce/ he setteth a net before his fete to ratche hym. And therfore

Tullius

Tullius saith. Enclyne not thyn eeres to flatterers/ ne take no counsaile of flatterers. And Caton sayth. Auyse the wel/ and eschue the wordes of swetnesse & of plesaunce. And eke thou shalt eschue the counsayling of thyn olde enemyes that ben reconciled. The boke saith/ that no wight retourneth safely in to ỹ grace of his olde enemy. And Esope saith/ ne trust not to hem/ to whiche thou hast somtyme had werre or enemyte/ ne tel hem not thy cousaile. And Seneke telleth the cause why it may not be/ for he saith/ there as great fyre hath longe tyme endured/ that there dwelleth some vapoure of hete. And therfore saith Salomon/ in thyn olde foe truste thou neuer. For surely thoughe thy enemy be reconciled/ and make the signe of humilite/ & lout to the with his hed/ truste him neuer: for certes he maketh thilke fayned humilite more for his profyte than for any humilite/ or for any loue of thy person/ bycause ỹ he demeth to haue victorie ouer thy persone by suche fayned countynaunce/ the whiche victorie he might not haue by strife or werre. And Petrus Alphons saith/ make no felowship with thyn olde enemies/ for if thou do hem bountie/ they wollen peruerte it to wickednesse. And eke thou must eschue the counsayling of hem that ben thy seruauntes/ and beren the gret reuerence: for paraunture they sayen it more for drede than for loue. And therfore sayth a philosopher in this wise. There is no wight parfetly true to him that he dredeth. And Tullius sayth/ there is no might so great of any emperour that longe may endure/ but he haue loue of the people and drede. ye shal eschue also the counsayling of folke that ben dronkelewe/ for they ne can no counsaile hyde. For Salom. saith/ there nis no pruite ther as reigneth dronkenesse. ye shal haue also in suspecte the counsayling of suche folke as counsayle you one thing priuely/ and cousaile you the contrary openly. For Cassidore sayth/ that it is a maner sleight to hynder his enemy whan he sheweth to done a thing openly/ and werketh priuely the contrarye. Thou shalte haue also in suspecte the counsayling of wicked folke/ that be alway ful of fraude. And Dauid sayth/ that blisful is the man ỹ hath not folowed the counsailinge of swiche.

Thou shalte also eschue the counsailinge of ponge folke/ for her counsayling is not ripe/ as Salomon sayth.

Nowe sir/ sythens I haue shewed you of suche folke as ye shal be counsailed of/ and so lowe it: nowe wol I teche you howe ye shall examyne your counsaile. After the doctrine of Tullius/ in examenyng of your counsaylours/ ye shall consyder many thynges.

First thou shalt consyder thilke thynge that thou purposest/ and vpon that thynge ỹ thou wolte haue cousaile/ that very trouthe be sayd and cõserued/ this is to say/ tel truely thy tale: for he that sayth falsse/ may not wel be counsayled in that case/ of whiche he speth. After this thou shalte consyder the thynges that acorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy cousaylours/ if reason accorde therto/ and eke if thy might maye attayne therto: and if the more parte and the better parte of your counsaylours accorden therto or no. Than shalte thou consyder what thyng shal folowe of her counsaylinge: As hate/ peace/ werre/ grace/ profyte/ or damage/ and many other thinges: and in al thinges thou shalte chose the beste/ and wepue al other thiges. Than shalt thou consyder of what rote is engendred the matter of thy counsayle/ and what fruite it may conceyue and engender. Thou shalt eke consyder al thy causes/ from whence they be sprongen. And whan thou hast pamyned thy cousaile/ as I haue sayd/ and whiche partye is the better and more profytable/ and hast approued it by many wyse folke & olde/ than thou shalt consider/ if thou mayst performe it/ and make of it a good ende. For certes reson wolle not that any man shal begyn a thinge/ but if he might performe it as him ought: ne no wight shulde take vpon him so heuy a charge/ but that he might beare it. For the prouerbe sayth/ he that to moche embraceth distraineth litel. And Caton sayth/ assay to do suche thinges as thou hast power to done/ lest the charge oppresse the to sore/ that the beshreweth werst thyng that thou hast begonne. And if so be that thou be in dout/ whether thou mayst performe a thinge or none/ chose rather for to

fayle

suffre than to begynne. And Peter Alphons sayth/ if thou hast aught to do a thynge/of whiche thou maiste repente/ it is better holde thy tonge styll than for to speke. Than maist thou vnderstonde by stronger resons/ that if thou haste power to performe a werke/of whiche thou shalt repente the/ than is it better thou suffre than begyn. Well sayne they that defenden euery wyght to assaye a thinge of which he is in doute whether he may performe it or none. And after whan ye haue examined your counsayle (as I haue sayde before) and knowe wel/ that ye maye performe your emprise: confirme it than sadly tyl it be at an ende. ¶ Nowe it is reason and tyme that I shewe you/whan and wherfore that ye maye chaunge your counsayle/ without repreue. Nothyng a man may chaunge his purpose and his counsayle/ if the cause ceaseth/ or whan a newe case betydeth. For the lawe sayth/that vpon thinges that newly betydeth/ behoueth newe counsayle. And Seneke sayth/if thy counsaile to cone to the eres of thyn enemyes/ chaunge thy counsayle. Thou mayste also chaunge thy counsayle/if so be thou fynde that by errour or by any other cause/ harme or damage may betyde. Also if thy counsayle be dishoneste/ other els come of dishoneste cause/ chaunge thy counsayle. For the lawe sayth/ that al bihestes that be dishoneste/ne ben of no valur: And eke/ if so be that it be impossible or may not gladly be performed or kepte.

And take this for a general rule/ that euery counsayle that is enfourmed so strongly/that it may not be chaunged for no condycion that may betyde/ I say that counsayle is wicked.

Melibeus/ whan he had herde the doctryne of his wyfe dame Prudence/ answerde in this wyse. Dame (quod he) as yet vnto this tyme ye han wel taught me/as in gouernayle how I shal gouerne me in the chesynge and in the withholdynge of my counsayle: but nowe wolde I fayne that ye wolde condescende especial/howe that ye seneth by our counsaylours that we haue chose in this present nede.

¶ My lorde (quod she) I beseche you in all humblesse/that ye wol not wylfully repreue or denye my resons/ne displese your hert though I speke thing that you displese/ for god wote as in myn entent/ I speke it as for your beste and for your honour and profyte eke/ and fully I hope that your benignyte wol take it in patience. And truste me wel that your counsaile in this case ne shulde not (as to speke properly) be called a counsayling/ but a mocion or a mouyng of folye/ in whiche counsayle ye haue erred in many a fondre wyse.

First ye haue erred in the assemblyng of your counsaylours: For first ye shulde haue cleped a fewe folke to your counsayle/ and after ye might haue shewed it to mo/ if it had be nede. But ye haue cleped to your counsayle a great multytude of people/ ful chargeous and full noyous for to here. Also ye haue erred/ for there as ye shulde haue onely cleped to your counsayle your trewe frendes/olde and wyse/ ye haue cleped straunge folke/ ponge folke/ false flatterers/ and enemyes reconcyled/and folke that done you reuerence withouten loue. And eke ye haue erred/ for ye haue brought with you to your counsaile ire/ couetyse/ and hastynesse/ the whiche thre thynges ben contrary to euery good counsayle/ honest & profytable/ the whiche thre thinges ye haue not distroyed neyther in your selfe ne in your counsaylours/as ye ought. ye haue erred also for ye haue shewed to your counsaylours your talent and your affections to make werre anon/ and for to do vengeaunce/ & they haue espyed by your wordes/to what thyng ye ben enclyned: and therfore haue they rather counsayled you to your talente/ than to your profyte. ye han erred eke/ for it seneth that you suffyseth to haue be counsayled by these counsaylours onely/and with lyte auysement/ where as in so hye and in so great a nede/ it had ben necessary mo counsaylours/ and more deliberacion to performe your emprise. ye han erred also/for ye haue not examyned your counsayle in the forsayd maters/ne in due manere as the case requireth. ye haue erred also/ for ye make no diuision bytwene your true frendes & your fayned counsaylours: ne ye haue not knowen the wyl of your trewe counsaylours & frendes/ olde/ and wyse/ but ye haue

caste

taste al her wordes in an hotchepot/ & enclyned pour herte to the more parte and to the gretter nombre of fooles than of wyse men. And therfore þ cõsaylinges that ben at cõgregacions and multitudes of folke/ there as men take more regarde to the nombre than to the sapience of persons/ ye sene wel/ that in such counsaylinges/ fookes han the maistrye. Melibe answerde and sayd ayen: I graunt well that I haue erred/ but there as thou hast tolde me here byforne/ that he nys not to blame that chaungeth his counsayle in certayne case/ and for certayne and iuste cause/ I am all redy to chaunge my counsaylours right as thou woldest deuyse. The prouerbe sayth/ for to done synne is mãusshe/ but certes for to perseuer longe in synne/ is werke of the dyuell.

To this sentẽce answereth anon dame Prudence & said: Examyneth (qõ she) wel pour counsayle/ and let vs se whiche of hem hath spoke moste resonably/ and taught pou beste counsayle. And for as moche as the examinacion is necessarye/ lette vs begyn at surgens and physiciens/ that first spake of this mater. I say that physiciens and surgiens haue said pou in pour cõsayle discretly/ as hem ought: and in her speche sayd ful wisely/ that to the office of hem apertayneth to done to euery wight honoure and profyte/ and no wight to anoye/ and after her crafte to don great diligence vnto the cure of hem/ whiche they haue in her gouernaũce. And sir/ right as they haue answerde wisely and discretly/ right so rede I that they ben hyely and souerainly guerdoned for her noble speche/ & ese for they shul more done their ententife besynesse in the curacion of pour doughter: for al be it so they ben pour frẽdes/ therfore shullen ye not suffre/ that they serue pou for naught/ but ye ought therafter guerdon hem/ and pay hem her largesse. And as touching the preposicion/ whiche the physiciens entreteden in this case/ this is to sayne/ that in maladies is/ that cõtrarie is warisshed by an other contrarie: I wolde fayne vnderstonde how ye vnderstonde thilke texte/ and what is pour sentence. Certes (qõ Melibeus) I vnderstonde it in this wise. Right as they han done me a cõtrarie/ so shulde I done hem an other/ for right as they han venged hem vpon me/ and done me wronge/ right so wolde I venge me vpon hem/ and don hem wronge/ and than haue I cured one contraire by an other.

Lo lo (qõ dame Prudence) how we lightly is euery man enclyned to his owne desyre & to his owne plesaunce. Certes (qõ she) the wordes of the physiciens ne shuld not ben vnderstode in that wise/ for certes wicked nesse is not contrarie to wicked nesse/ ne vengeaunce is not contrarie to vengeaunce/ ne wronge to wronge/ but euery of hem encreseth & engendreth other. But certes the wordes of the physicians shulde be vnderstonde in this wyse/ for good & wicked nesse ben two contraryes: and peace and werre/ vengeãce & suffraũce/ discorde & accorde/ and many other thinges: But certes wicked nesse shalbe warisshed with goodnes/ discorde by accorde/ werre by peace/ & so forthe in other thinges. And therto accordeth saynt Poule the apostel in many places: he sayth/ ne yelde no harme for harme/ ne wicked speche for wicked speche/ but do wel to hem þ don to þ harme/ & blesse them that sayth the harme. And in many other places he amonisheth peace & accorde.

But now we wol I speke of the cõsayle/ which was ygeue vnto pou by men of law/ and the wyse folke and olde folke/ that sayden al by one accorde as ye herde byforne/ that ouer al thinges ye shal done pour besynesse & diligence to kepe pour person/ and to warnisshen pour house: And they saide also/ that in this case ye ought to werchen ful wisely and with great delyberacion. And sir/ as to the first poynte/ that toucheth the kepyng of pour person: ye shal vnderstode that he þ hath werre/ shal euer deuoutely & meekely prayen/ byfore al thinges/ that Jesu Christ of his mercy wol haue him in his protection/ and to be his soueraine helper at his nede: For certes in this worlde there nys no wight that may be counsayled and kepte sufficiently without the kepynge of our lorde Jesu Christ. To this sentence accordeth the prophete Dauid that sayth: If god ne kept the cyte/ in ydel waketh he that it kepeth. Now sir/ than shulde he compte the kepyng of pour person to pour trewe frendes/ that ben approued and yknowe/ and of hem

ben shal ye aske helpe/your person to kepe. For Caton saith: If thou haue nede of helpe/ aske it of thy frendes/ for there nys none so good a phisitien as thy true frende. And after this than shal ye kepe you fro al straunge folke/ & fro lyers/ and haue alway in suspecte her companye. For Peter Alphons saythe. Betake no company by ꝑ way of no straunge way/ but if so be that thou haste knowen him of longer time: And if so be that he fall in to thy companye/ paraventure without thyn assent & good wyl/ enquire than as subtelly as thou canst of his conuersacion/ and of his lyfe byfome/ and fayne thyselfe/ sayeng thou wouldest go thyder as thou wolte not go/ and if he beare a spere/ holde the on the right syde of him/ and if he beare a swerde/ holde the on the lefte syde of him. And than shal ye kepe you wisely from al maner of suche people as I haue sayd you here byfore/ and him and her counsayle eschue. And after this than shal ye kepe you/ in suche maner/ that for any presumpcion of your bodely strength/ that ye disprise not ne acounte not the myght of your aduersary so lyte/ that ye lete the kepyng of your person for your presumpcion/ for every wyse man dredeth his enemy. And Salomon saith: A very foole is he that of al hath drede: But certes he that thorowe hardynesse of his herte/ and throngh the hardynesse of him selfe/ hath to great presumpcion/ him shal yuel betyde. Than shal ye eurmore encountre wayte ambussheme̅tes/ and al espyaile. For Seneke sayth: The wyse man that dredeth harmes/ escheweth harmes: he ne falleth in to no perylles/ that perylk eschewyth. And al be it so that thou seme/ that thou be in secret place/ yet shalte thou alway don dylygence in kepyng of thy person/ this is to say/ ne be not negligent to kepe thyn owne person/ not onely for thy greatest enemy/ but also for thy leste enemy. Senek saith/ a man that is wel auysed/ he dredeth his leste enemye. Dupde sayth/ that the lyte wesell wol slee the great bulle & the wyse herte. And the prouerbe sayth/ that a lyte thorne wol greue a lyng ful sore/ and a lyte hounde wol holde the wyse bore. But nathelesse I say not thou shalt be so cowarde/ that thou doute where as is no drede. The boke sayth/ that some men haue great lyste to discryue/ but yet they drede to be discryued. And kepe the fro the companye of wemen: for the boke sayth/ with wemen ne make no company/ but skye her wordes as venym.

¶ Nowe as to the seconde poynte/ where as your wyse counsaylours counsayled you to warneston your house with great dylygence/ I wolde fayne knowe howe ye vnderstonde thilke wordes/ and what is your sentence.

Melibeus answerde and sayd/ certes I vnderstonde it in this wyse/ that I shall warneston myn house with toures/ suche as haue castels and other maner edyfices/ and armure and artelleries/ bitwene which thinges I may my person and my house so kepe and defende/ that myn enemyes shullen be in drede myn house to approche. To this sentence answerde anon Prudence. Warnustyng (qd she) of the toures & of the edyfices/ is with great costages and with great trauayle/ and whan that they ben accomplissed/ yet ben they not worthe a strawe/ but if they ben defended with trewe frendes/ that ben olde and wyse. And vnderstondeth wel/ that the greateste and the strongeste garnyson that ryche men may haue/ as wel to kepen her persone as her goodes is/ that they be ybloued with her subiectes/ and with her neyghbours. For thus sayth Tullius/ that there is a maner garnyson/ that no man may venquisshe ne discomfyte/ and that is a lorde to be ybloued of his citezyns/ & of his people.

¶ Nowe sir/ as to the thirde poynte/ where as your olde and wyse counsaylours sayd/ that ye ought not sodaunly ne hastely procede in this nede/ but that ye aughten purueyen and apparayle you in this case/ with great dylygẽce and deliberacion. Verily I trowe that they sayde right trewly & right sothe. For Tullius saith: In every dede or thou begyn it/ apparayle the with great dylygence. Than say I in warres auncr tastynge/ in werre/ in batayle/ and in warnestoring/ or thou begyn I rede that thou apparayle the therto/ and do it with great deliberacion. For Tullius sayth: The longe apparelyng to fore the batayle/ maketh shorte victoire. And Lassidomus sayth: The garnyson

the iurisdyction vpon hem / and he shall punysshe hem / as the lawe axeth & requireth.

A ha / sayd Melibee / this vengeaunce hyeth me no thyng / I bethynke me nowe / and take hede how that fortune hath nourisshed me fro my childhode / and hath holpe me to passe many a stronge paas: Nowe I wol assaye her / trowing with goddes helpe / that she shal helpe me my shame for to auenge.

TRuely sayd Prudence / if ye wol werke by my counsayle / ye shal not assay fortune by no waye: ne ye shal not lene or bowe vnto her / after the worde of Seneke. For thinges that ben folisshly done / and that ben done in hope of fortune / shal neuer come to good ende. And as the same Seneke sayth: The more clere and the more shynyng that fortune is / the more britel and the soner broke she is. Trusteth not in her / for she is not stedfast ne stable. For whan thou trowest to be mosie sure & stedfast of her helpe / she wol sayle and disceyue the. And where as ye say / ỳ fortune hath nourisshed you fro your childhod / I say ỳ in so moche ye shal the lesse trust in her / & in her wytte. For Seneke sayth: What man that is nourisshed by fortune / she maketh him a great foole. Nowe than syth ye desyre and axe vengeaunce / and the vengeaunce that is done after the lawe / and before the iuge / ne lyketh you not / and the vengeance that is done in hope of fortune is perylous & vncertayne / than haue ye none other remedye / but for to haue your recourse vnto the souerayne iuge / that vengeth al vilanyes and wronges. And he shal venge you / after that him selfe witnesseth / where as he sayth: Leaue the vengeaunce to me / and I shal do it.

MElibe answerde / if I ne venge me of the vilany that men haue don to me / I sómon or warn hem / that haue don to me that villany / and al other / to do me an other villanye. For it is written: If thou take no vengeaunce of an olde vilany / thou sómoneste thyn aduersaryes to do the a newe vilany: And also for my suffraunce men wolde do me so moche vilany / that I might neither bere it ne suffryn it / & so shulde I be put & holden ouer lowe. For men sayn / in myskel suffring shal many thyng fal vnto the / whiche thou shalt not mowe suffre.

MLeries (qõ Prudence) I graūt you / that ouer moche suffraūce is not good / but yet ne folowith it not therof / ỳ euery person / to whõ men do vilanye / shulde take of it vengeaūce / for that appertayneth and longeth al only to iuges / for they shulde venge the vilanyes and iniuryes: And therfore those two auctorites that ye haue said afore / ben onely vnderstõde in the iuges: For whã they suffre ouer moche the wronges & vilanyes to be done / without punisshement / they sómon not a man al only for to do newe wrõges / but they cõmaunden. Also a wyse man sayth / that the iuge that correcteth not the synner / cõmaundeth & byddeth him do synne. And the iuges and souerayns / might in their londe so moche suffre of ỳ shrewes & misdoers / that they shulde by suche suffraunce / by processe of tyme / weye of suche power & might / that they shulde put out the iuges and the souerayns from their places / and at laste / make hem lese her lordshyppes.

But set vs nowe suppose / ỳ ye haue leue to venge you: I say ye be not of might & power as nowe to venge you / for if ye wol make cõparison vnto the might of your aduersaryes / ye shulde fynde in many thynges that I haue shewed you er this / that their cõdycion is better than youres / and therfore saye I / that it is good as nowe / that ye suffre and be payen.

Furthermore / ye knowe wel that after the comen sawe / it is a wodnesse / a man to stryue with a stronger or a more mighty man than he is hym selfe / and for to stryue with a man of euen strength / that is to say / with as strõge a man as he is / it is perylle: and for to stryue with a weker man / it is folye. & therfore shuld a man flye stryuing as mykel as he might. For Salomon sayth: It is a great worshyp to a man to kepe him fro noyse & stryfe: and if it so befal & happe that a man of greater might and strength than thou arte / do the grenaunce: studye & bespe the rather to stynt the same grenaunce / than for to venge the. For Seneke sayth / that he putteth him in great peryl / that striueth wt a greater man thã he is him selfe. And Caton saith / if a man of higher astate is

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degre/or more mighty than thou/do the anoye or grenaunce/suffre hym: for he that ones hath greued the/may an other tyme releue the and helpe the. Yet sette I case ye haue lycence for to venge you. I saye that there ben full many thynges/that shal restrayne you of vengeaunce takyng/and make you for to enclyne to suffre/ and for to haue pacience in the wronges that haue ben done to you. First & formest if ye wol consyder the sautes that ben in your owne person/for whiche sautes god hath suffred you haue this tribulacion/as I haue said to you here before. For the poete saythe/ that we ought paciently take the tribulacions that come to vs/ whan that we thynke & consyder that we haue deserued to haue the. And saynt Gregoire sayth/ that whan a man cōsydereth wel the nombre of his defautes & of his synnes/ the paynes and the tribulacions that he suffreth/ seme the lesse vnto hym. And in as moche as hym thynketh his synnes more heuy and greuous/ in so moche semeth his payne the lyghter & the esyer vnto hym. Also ye owe to enclyne and bowe your herte to take the parte of our lorde Jesu Lhust/as saith saynt Peter in his epystles. Jesu Lhust he saythe hath suffred for vs/ & yeuen ensample to euery man to folowe and sewe hym/for he dyd neuer synne/ ne neuer came there a vilaynous worde out of his mouthe. Whan men cursed hym/ he cursed hem not. And whan men bete hym/he manaced hem not. Also the great parte/whiche sautes þ ben in paradyse haue had in tribulacion þ they haue suffred/ without her deserte or gylt/ought moche styre you to pacience. Furthermore/ye shul enforce you to haue pacience/consyderyng that the tribulacions of this worlde but lytel whyle endure/ and sone passed ben and gon/and the ioy that a man seketh to haue by pacience in tribulacions is perdurable/after that þ apostle sayth in his epystle. The ioye of god he saythe/ is perdurable/that is to say/euerlastyng. Also he wryteth and byseecheth stedfastly that he is not wel norysshed and wel taught/that can not haue pacyence/ or wol not exercyse patience. For Salomon sayth/ that the doctryne and the wytte of a man is knowen by pacyence. And in an other place he sayth/ that he that is pacyent/gouerneth hym by great prudence.

And the same Salomon saythe. The angry and wrathful man maketh noyses/ and the pacient man attempreth and stylleth hem. He saythe also/it is more worthe to be pacient than to be right stronge. And he that maye haue the lordshyp of his owne herte is more to prayse/ than he that by his force or strength taketh great cytees. And therfore sayth saint Jame in his epystle/ that pacyence is a great vertue of perfeccyon.

CErtes (qd Melibee) I graūt you dāe Prudence/that patience is a great vertue of perfection/but euery mā may not haue the perfection that ye scribe/ ne I am not of the nombre of right perfyte men. For myn herte may neuer be in peace/ vnto the tyme it be auenged. And al be it so that it was great peryll to vnyn enemyes to do me a vilanye/ in takyng vengeaūce vpon me/ yet toke they no hede of the peryll/ but fulfylled her wycked wyl and her corage: And therfore me thynketh men ought not reprene me/though I put me in a lytel peryll/for to auēge me/& though I do a great excesse/that is to saye: that I venge one outrage by an other.

LAh (qd dame) Prudence/ye say your wyl as you lyketh: But in no case of the worlde a man shulde not do outrage ne excesse for to venge hym. For Lassiodor sayth/ that as wel dothe he that vengeth hym by outrage/ as he that dothe the outrage. And therfore ye shall venge you after the order of right/ that is to say/by the lawe/and not by excesse ne by outrage. And also if you wol venge you of þ outrage of your aduersaries in other manere than right cōmaundeth/ ye synne. And therfore sayethe Seneke: that a man shal neuer venge shrewdnesse by shrewdnesse. And if ye say that right asketh to defende violence by violence/ and fightyng by fightyng: certes ye say soth/ whan the defence is done without interual/ or without tarryeng or delay/ for to defende hym/ and nat for to venge hym. And it behoueth that a man put suche attemperaūce in his defence/ that men haue no cause ne mater to re-

preue hym that defendeth hym of outrage and eyresse/for els were it agayne reason. Parde ye knowe wel/ ỳ ye make no defence as now/ for to defende you/ but for to venge you: and so sheweth it that ye haue no wyl to do your dede attemperatly/ and therfore me thynketh that pacience is good. For Salomon sayth/ that he ỳ is not patient shal haue gret harme.

QErtes said Melibee I graūt you/ that whan a man is impacient and wrothe of that that toucheth hym not/and that appertayneth not vnto hym/ though it harme hym it is no wonder. For the lawe sayth/ that he is coulpable/ that entremeteth or meteth with suche thynges as apertayneth not vnto hym. And Salom. saith/ that he that entremetteth of the noise or strife of another man/is like to hym that taketh a straunge houde by the eres: For right as he/that taketh a straunge houde by the eres/is other while bytten by ỳ houde/ right so in the same wyse it is reason that he haue harme that by his impacience medleth hym of the noyse of an other man/where as it appertayneth not vnto hym. But ye knowe wel that this dede/that is to say my grefe and my disese/toucheth me right nygh. And therfore though I be wrothe and impacient/ it is no merueyle: and sauynge your grace I can not se that it might greatly harm me/ though I toke vengeaunce/ for I am rycher & more mighty thā myn enemyes be: And wel knowe ye that by money and by hauyng great possessyons/ ben al thynges of this worlde gouerned. And Salomon sayth/al these thynges obey to money.

Whan Prudence had herde her husbonde auaunt hym of his rychesse and his moneye/ dispraysing the power of his aduersaries/ she spake and sayd in this wyse. Certes dere sir/ I graunt you that ye be ryche and mighty/ and that the richesse is good to hem that haue wel goten hem/ and that well can vse hem. For right as the body of a man may not lyue without the soule/ no more may it lyue without the temporel goodes/and by richesse may a man get him great frendes. And therfore sayth Pamphilius: If a nerthes doughter he sayth be riche/she may chese of a thousande men/whiche she wol take to her husbonde: for of a thousande/one wol not forsake her ne refuse her. And this Pamphilius sayth also: If thou be right happy/that is to say/ if thou be ryche/ thou shalt fynde a great nombre of felowes & frendes. And if thy fortune change/ farwel frendshyp & felowshyp/for thou shalt be aloue without any companye/ but if it be the companye of poore folke. And yet sayth this Pamphilus more ouer/that they that ben bonde and thral of lynage/shal be made worthy and noble by the rychesses. And right so as by the richesses there come many goodnesses/right so by powertie come there many harmes and yueles/ for great powertie constrayneth a man to do many yueles. And therfore calleth Cassiodor powertie ỳ mother of ruyne/ that is to say/ the mother of ouerthrowyng & of fallyng downe. And therfore sayth Peter Alfonce: One of the greatest aduersytes of this worlde is whan a fre man by kynde or of byrthe/is cōstrayned by powerty to eete the almesse of his enemye. And the same sayth Innocent/in one of his bokes: He sayth/that sorouſull and mishappy is the condycion of a poore begger/ for if he aske not his meate/ he dyeth for hunger/ and if he aske/ he dyeth for shame: and algates necessite cōstrayneth hym to aske. And therfore sayth Salomon/ that better is to dye/than for to haue such powerte. And as the same Salomon sayth: Better it is to dye of bytter dethe/than for to lyue in suche wyse. By these resons that I haue sayd vnto you/& by many other resons that I coulde say/ I graunt you that rychesses ben good/to hem that getten hem wel/ and to hem that wel vsen tho richesses: And therfore wol I shewe you how ye shal behaue you in gatheryng of richesses/& in what maner ye shullen vse hem.

First ye shal get hem without great desyr/ by good leyser/ soberly and not ouer hastily/ for a man that is to desyrous to gette richesse/ habandoneth hym first to theft and to al other yueles. And therfore sayth Salomon: He that hasteth hym to be sely to wexe riche/ he shal be non innocent. He sayth also/ that the richesse that hastely cometh to a man/ sone and lightly

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gethe & passeth from a man/ but that richesse that cometh fyrst & lyst/ wexeth alwaye and multiplyeth. And sir ye shal gette richesse by your wytte and by your trauaile/ vnto your profyte/ and that without wronge or harme doynge to any other persone. For the lawe sayth/ there maketh no man him selfe riche/ if he do harme to an other wight/ this is to say: that nature defendeth and forbydeth by right/ that no man make him selfe riche vnto the harme of a nother person. And Tullius sayth/ that no science ne no dede of dethe/ ne nothyng ꝑ may fal vnto a man/ is so moche ayenst nature/ as a man to entreate for his owne profyte/ to the harme of an other man. And though the great and mighty men gette ryches more lightly than thou/ yet shalt thou not be idel ne slouthe to do thy profyte/ for thou shalt in al wise flye idelnesse. For Salomon sayth/ that idelnesse techeth a man to do many euels. And the same Salomon sayth/ that he that trauayleth and besyeth him to tylthe his londe/ shal ete breed: but he that is idell and casteth him to no besynesse ne occupacion/ shal fal in pouerte & dye for hunger. And he that is slowe/ can neuer fynde conenable tyme for to do his profyte. For there is a Versifyer sayth/ that the idel man eyleth him in wynter/ by cause of the great colde/ and in somer bycause of the hete. For these causes sayth Caton/ wasteth and destroye you not ouer moch for to slepe/ for ouer moche reste nourissheth and causeth many vyces. And therfore sayth saint Jerom/ do some good dedes/ that the dyuel whiche is our enemy/ ne fynde you not occupyed/ for the dyuel ne taketh not lightly vnto his werkyng such as he fyndeth occupyed in good werkes.

Than thus/ in gettyng richesses ye must flye idelnesse. And afterwarde ye shul vse the richesses/ whiche ye haue gote by your wyt and by your trauayle/ in suche maner/ that men holde you not to scarce ne to sparyng/ ne fole large/ that is to say/ ouer large a spender: for right as men blame an auaricyous man by cause of his scarcete & chynchery/ in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth ouer largely. And therfore sayth Caton: Vse (sayth he) the richesses that thou hast goten in such maner/ that men may haue no mater ne cause to cal the mother wytche ne chynche: For it is great shame to a man to haue a poore herte and a riche purse. He sayth also/ the goodes that thou hast gote/ vse them by mesure/ that is to say/ spende mesurably/ for they that folysshly waste and dispede the goodes that they haue/ whan they haue no more propre of her owne/ than they shape hem to take the goodes of an other man. I say than that ye shal flye auarice/ vsyng your richesse in suche maner/ that men saye not that your richesses ben buryed/ but that ye haue hem in your might & in your weldyng. For a wyse man repreueth the auaricyous man/ and sayth thus in this Verses tyro. Wherto & why burieth a man his goodes by his great auarice/ and knoweth well that nedes he must dye/ for dethe is the rude of euery man/ as in this present lyfe? And for what cause or encheson ioyneth he hym/ or knytteth he him so faste vnto his goodes/ that al his wyttes mowe not discure him/ ne departe him fro his goodes/ and knoweth wel/ or ought to knowe/ ꝑ whan he is dede/ he shal no thing beare with him out of this worlde. And therfore sayth saynt Augustyn/ that the auaricyous man is lykened vnto hell/ that the more it swalowe th/ the more desyre it hath to swalowe and deuoure. And as wel as ye wolde eschue to be called an auaricyous man or chynche/ as well shulde ye kepe and gouerne you in suche a wyse/ that men cal you not foole large. Therfore sayth Tullius/ The goodes of thyne house ne shulde not be hydde ne kepte so close/ but that they myght be opened by ryght and debonayrte/ that is to say/ to yeue hem parte that haue great nede. Ne thy goodes shulde not be so open/ to be euery mans goodes. Afterwarde in gettyng of your richesses and in vsyng hem/ ye shal alway haue thre thynges in your herte/ that is to say/ your fonde god/ voster nec/ & good name. First ye shal haue god in your herte/ and for no richesse ye shulde do any thyng/ which may in any maner displese god your creatour and maker. For after the worde of Salomon/ it is better to haue a lytel good with the feare of

god/ than to haue moche good and tresoure/ and lese the loue of his lorde god. And the prophete sayth/ that better it is to be a good man/ and haue lytel good & tresour/ than to be holden a shrewe/ and haue great rychesse. And yet I say ferthermore/ that ye shulde alway do your besynesse to get you richesses/ so that ye get hem with good conscience. And the apostle sayth/ that there nys thing in this worlde/ of whiche we shulde haue so great joy/ as whan our conscience bereth vs good wytnesse. And the wise man saith: þ the substaunce of a man is ful good/ whan synne is not in mans conscience. Afterwarde in getyng of your richesses and in vsyng of hem/ ye muste haue great besynesse & great dyligence/ that your good name be alwaye kept and conserued. For Salomon sayth/ that better it is/ & more it auayleth a man to haue a good name/ than for to haue many richesses: And therfore he sayth in an other place. Do great dylygence sayth Salomon/ in kepyng of thy frendes and of thy good name/ for it shal leger abyde with the than any tresour/ be it neuer so precious. And certes he shulde not be called a great gentylman/ that after god & good conscience/ al thynges lefte/ nt dothe his dyligence & besynesse to kepe his good name. And Cassyodor sayth/ that it is a spice of a gentyl herte/ whan a man loueth and desyreth to haue a good name. And therfore sayth saynt Augustyn/ that there ben two thynges that ben right necessarye & also nedeful: and that is good conscience/ & good lose/ that is to saye: good conscience to thyn owne person inwarde/ and good lose for thy neyghbour outwarde. And he that trusteth him so moche in his good conscience/ that he dispyseth & setteth at nought his good name or loose/ and reckeyth not though he kepe not his good name/ nys but a cruel churle.

Sir/ now we haue I shewed you how we ye shuld do in gettyng richesses/ & how we ye shulde vse hem: and I se wel that for þ trust that ye haue in your richesses/ ye wol moue werre and batayle. I counsaile you that ye begyn no werre in trust of your richesses/ for they ne suffyse not werres to maintayne. And therfore sayth a philosopher: That man that desyreth and wolde algates haue werre/ shal neuer haue sufficiaunce: for the richer that he is/ the greater dispenses muste he make/ if he wol haue worshyp & victoire. And Salomon sayth/ that the greater richesses that a man hath/ þ more dispendours he hath. And therfore sir/ al be it so that for your riches ye may haue moche folke/ yet behoueth it not/ ne it is not good to begyn werre/ where as ye may in other maner haue peace/ vnto your worshyp & profyte: For the victoire of batayle þ ben in this worlde/ lyth not in great nombre or multytude of people/ ne in the vertue of man/ but it lyth in the myght and in the honde of our lorde god almighty. And therfore Judas Machabeus/ which was goddes knight/ whan he shulde fight ayens his aduersary/ that had a greater nombre and a greater multytude of folke/ & stronger than was his people of Machabee/ yet he recomforted his lytel company/ and said right in this wyse: Al so lightly said he/ may our lorde god almighty yeue victoire to a fewe folke/ as to many folke/ for the victoire of a batayle stemeth not by the great nombre of people/ but it cometh from our lorde god of heuen. And dere sir/ for as moche as there is no man certayne/ if it be worthy þ god yeue hem victoire or not/ after that Salomon sayth/ therfore euery man shuld gretly drede werres to begyn: and bycause that in batayles fal many perylle/ and happeth other whyle/ that as soone is the great man slayne as the lytel man. And as it is written in the seconde boke of kynges: The dedes of batayles ben auenturous & nothing certayne/ for as lightly is one hurt with a speere as an other: And for ther is great peryl in werre/ therfore shulde a man sore and eschue werre in as moche as a mã may goodly. For Salomon sayth/ he that loueth peryll/ shal fal in peryll.

After that dame Prudence had spoken in this maner/ Melibe answerde and said. Ist wel dame Prudence/ that by your fayre wordes and your resons that ye haue shewed me/ that þ werre lyketh you nothyng/ but I fynde not yet herde your counsaile how I shal do in this nede.

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Certes (said she) I counsaile you that ye accorde with your aduersaries/ & that ye haue peace with hem. For saynt James saithe in his Epistell: that by concorde & peace shall riches wexe great: and by debate & discorde ryches decay. And ye knowe wel/ that one of the greatest & most soueraine thynges y is in this worlde/ is loue and peace. And therfore saith our lord Jesu Christ to his apostels/ In this wise: wel happy ben they/ that loue and purchace peace/ for they be called y children of god. Ah/ said Melibe/ now se I wel/ that ye loue not myn honoure ne my worshippe. ye knowe wel that myn aduersaries haue begon this debate & huge by their outrage. And ye se wel y they ne require ne pray me of peace/ ne they ase not to be reconsiled. Wol ye than that I go make me/ & obey me to hem/ & crye hem mercy? Forsoth that were not my worshyp. For right as men say/ ouer great humblenesse engendreth despraysing/ so faretth it by to great humylite or meekenesse.

Than began dame Prudēce to make semblant of wrath/ & said: Certes sir/ saue your grace. I loue your honour & profite as I do myn owne/ & euer haue do: ye ne none other wyse se the cōtrary. And yet/ if I had said/ that ye shulde haue purchased peace & reconsiliation/ I ne had mocke mistake me/ ne said unpsit. For the wise man saith: the discretion begynneth by another man/ & the reconsiling begynneth by thy selfe. And the prophet saith: flye shrewdenesse/ and do goodnesse/ seke peace & folowe it/ in asmoche as in the is. Yet say I not/ that ye shulde rather pursue to your aduersaries for peace/ than they shulde to you: for I knowe wel that ye ben so harde herted/ that ye wol do nothyng for me. And Salomon saith: he that hath ouer harde an hert/ he at last shal myshappe or misbetyde.

Than Melibe hath herde dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrath/ he said in this wise. Dame I prayse you/ that ye be not displeased of thyng that I say/ for ye knowe wel that I am angry & troubled/ and that is no wonder: & thynke wel how wrath/ I wot not wel what to be/ ne what thyng I saye. Therfore the prophete saith: that troubled eyen haue no clere sight. Shew say and counsaile me as you lyketh/ for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire: And if ye reprene me of my folye/ I am the more holden to loue and prayse you. For Salomon saith/ that he that repreueth him that doth folye/ he shal fynde greater grace than he that discryeth him by swete wordes.

Than saide dame Prudence/ I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger/ but for your great profyte/ for Salomon saith: he is more worth/ that reproueth or chydeth a fole for his folye/ shewyng him semblaunt of wrathe/ than he that supporteth him and praiseth him in his misdoyng/ and laugheth at his folye. And this same Salomon saithe afterwarde: That by the sorouful visage of a man/ that is to say/ by the sore & heuy countenaūce of a man/ the fole correcteth and amendeth him selfe.

Than said Melibe/ I shal not conne answere vnto so many faire reasons as ye put to me and shewe: say shortly your wyl & your counsaile/ and I am al redy to performe and fulfyl it. ¶ Than dame Prudence discouered al her wyl vnto him and said. I counsaile you (said she) above al thynges/ that ye make peace bytwene god and you/ and be reconsyled vnto him and to his grace/ for as I haue saide you here before/ god hath suffred you to haue this tribulacion & disese for your synnes: and if ye do as I saye you/ god wol sende your aduersaries vnto you/ and make hem fall at your fete/ redy to do your wyl and your cōmaundement. For Salomon saith/ When the condycion of man is plesaunt and lyking to god/ he chaungeth the hertes of the mans aduersaries/ and constraineth hem to beseche him of peace & of grace. And I praye you let me speke with your aduersaries prively/ for they shal not knowe that it be of your wyl or your assent: And than when I knowe their wyll and their entent/ I may counsaile you the more surely.

Dame saide Melibe/ dothe your wyll and your lyking/ for I put me holy in your disposicion and ordynaunce.

Than dame Prudence/ when she sawe the good wyll of her husbonde/ desyrede & toke

aduise in her selfe/ thynkyng how she might bring thes nede vnto a good conclusyon and to a good ende: And whan she saw her tyme/ she sente for these aduersaries to come vnto her in a pryue place. And shewed meekly vnto hem the great goodes that come of peace/ & the great harmes & perils that ben in werre/ and said to hem in a goodly maner: how ỳ hem ought haue great repentaunce of the iniury and wrong/ that they had done to Melibeus her lorde/ & vnto her & to her doughter.

And whan they herde ỳ goodly wordes of dame Prudence/ they were so suppused & rauysshed/ and had so gret ioye of her/ that wonder was to tel. ¶ Ah/ lady (said they) ye haue shewed vnto vs the blessyng of swetnesse after the sayeng of Dauid the prophete/ for ỳ reconsylyng which we be nat worthy to haue in no manere. But we ought require it with gret cõtrition and humilite/ that ye of your goodnesse haue presented vnto vs. Nowe se we wel/ that the science and conuyng of Salomon is ful trewe/ for he saith: That swete wordes multiply & encreace frendes/ and maketh shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes (said they) we put our dede and all our mater & cause/ al holy in your goodwyl/ and been redy to obey at the cõmaundement of our lorde Melibeus. And therfore dere & benigne lady: we praye and beseche you/ as meekly as we can and may/ that it lyke vnto your great goodnesse/ to fulfyl in dede/ your goodly wordes. For we cõsider and knowe/ that we haue offended and greued our lorde Melibeus out of measure: so forforth/ ỳ we be nat of power to make hym amendes. And therfore we oblige and bynde vs and our fedes/ for to do al at his wyll and cõmaundement: but paraventure he hath suche heuynesse/ and suche wrathe to vs warde/ because of our offence/ that he wol enuoye vs suche a payne/ as we mowe nat beare ne sustayne. And therfore noble lady/ we beseech your womanly pite/ to take suche aduysement in this nede/ that we ne our frendes be nat dissherited ne distroyed/ through our folye.

Certes (said Prudẽce) It is an harde thinge and right perilous/ that a man put hym al in certy in arbytration & iugement/ and in the might and power of his enemy: For Salomon saith: leueth me/ & yeueth credence to ỳ I shal say: Ne yeueth neuer ỳ power ne gouernaunce of thy goodes/ to thy son/ to thy wyfe/ to thy frende/ ne to thy brother: ne yeue thou neuer might ne mastry ouer thy body while thou liueste. Now/ sith he defendeth ỳ a man shulde nat yeue to his brother ne to his frende/ the might of his body. Dy a strõger reason he defendeth & forbedeth a man to yeue hym selfe to his enemy. And natheles I counsaile you ỳ ye myslyuyst nat my lorde: for I wot wel and knowe verily/ that he is debonaire & meke/ large/ curteys/ and nothing desirous ne coueitous of goodes ne riches. For there is nothyng in this worlde ỳ he desireth/ saue onely worship and honour. Furthermore I knowe/ and ryght sure/ ỳ he shal nothyng do in this nede/ without my counsaile: and I shal so worke in this cause/ that by the grace of our lorde god/ ye shalbe reconsyled vnto vs.

Than said they with one voyce/ worshypful lady we put vs and our goodes al fully in your wyl and disposicion/ & ben redy to come/ what day that it lyketh vnto your noblesse to sympte vs or assyne vs for to make our obligacion & bonde as stronge as it lyketh vnto your goodnes/ that we mowe fulfyl the wyl of you & of my lorde Melibe.

Whan dame Prudẽce had herd the answers of these men/ she bad hem go ayen prively/ & she returned to her lorde Melibe/ & tolde hym how she founde his aduersaries ful repentaunt/ knowlegyng ful lowly her synnes & trespas/ and how they were redy to suffre al payne/ requiryng & prayeng hym of mercy and pyte.

Than said Melibe/ he is wel worthy to haue pardon & forgeuenesse of his synne/ that excuseth not his synne/ but knowlegeth and repenteth him/ asking indulgẽce. For Senek saith/ there is the remission and forgeuenesse/ where as the confession is: for confession is neyghbour to innocence. And therfore I assent and confirme me to haue peace/ but it is good that we do nought without the assent and wyl of our frendes.

Than was Prudẽce right glodde and ioyful

ſaill and ſaide: Certes ſir / ye haue well and goodly anſwered: for right as by the counſaile/aſſent/ and helpe of your frendes/ye haue ye ſtrength to auenge you and make werre: right ſo/ without her counſaile ſhall ye not accorde you/ne haue peace with your aduerſaries. For the ſaw ſaithe: There is nothig ſo good/ by waye of warde/ as a thynge to be auounded by him that it was ꝓpounde.

Than dame Prudence/ without delay or taring/ ſent anon her meſſanger for her huſſolde and her olde frendes / whiche that were trewe and wiſe: and tolde hem by order/ i the preſence of Melibe/al ꝑ matter/as it is aboue expreſſed and declared. And prayed hem that they wolde ſaye their aduyſe and counſaile/ what beſt were to do in this nede. And whan Melibeus frendes had taken her aduyſe and deliberation of the forſaid matter/ & had examyned it by great buſyneſſe and diligence. They gaue ful counſaile for to haue peace and reſt/ & that Melibee ſhulde receyue with good hert his aduerſaries/ to forgeuenneſſe & mercy.

And whan dame Prudence had herde thaſſent of her lorde Melibee/and the counſaile of his frendes accorde with her wyl and her entencion/ſhe was wonderly gladde in her hert/ and ſaid. There is an olde prouerbe (ſayde ſhe) That the goodneſſe that thou mayſt do this day/do it/and abide it nat/ne delay it nat tyl the neyt day. And therfore I counſaile/ that ye ſende your meſſengers/ſuch as be diſcrete and wiſe/ vnto your aduerſaries: telling hem in your behalfe/ that if they wol treat of peace and accorde / that they ſhape hem without delay or tarying/ to come vnto vs: whiche thing perfourned was in dede. And whan theſe trepaſours/ and repentyng folke of her folyes/that is to ſay / the aduerſaries of Melibeus/had herde what theſe meſſangers ſaid vnto hem/they were right gladde and ioyful. and anſwered ful meekely and benignely/ yelding graces and thankes to her lorde Melibee/ and to al his compayny: and ſhope hem without delay to go with the meſſangers / and obeyed to the cõmaundement of her lorde Melibeus. And right anon they toke her way to the courte of Melibee/and toke with hem ſome of their true frendes/to make ſaythe for hem/ and for to be her borowes: And whan they were comen to the preſence of Melibee/ he ſaid to hem theſe wordes. It ſtondeth thus/ ſaide Melibee/and ſothe it is/that cauſeleſſe & without ſyght and reſon/ye haue done great iniuries and wronges to me and my wyfe Prudence/and to my doughter alſo/for ye haue entred in to my houſe by violence/and haue don ſuche outrage/ that al men knowe wel that ye haue deſerued dethe. And therfore wol I knowe and wete of you/whether ye woll put the puniſſhynge and the chaſtyſing & the vengeaunce of this outrage/in the wyl of me and of my wife/ or ye wol not.

Than the wyſeſt of hem tho anſwerd for hem al/and ſaid. Sir (ſaid he) we knowe wel that we ben vnworthy to come to the courte of ſo great a lorde and ſo worthy as ye be/ for we haue ſo gretly miſtaken vs/ and haue offended and agylted in ſuche wiſe again your high lordeſhyp/ that truely we haue deſerued the dethe/but yet for the great goodneſſe & debonairte/that al the world witneſſeth of your perſon/we ſubmytte vs to the excellence and benignyte of your gracious lordſhyp/ & ben redy to obey to al your cõmaundementes/beſeching you/ that of your mercyable ꝓpte ye wol conſyder our great repentaunce/ & ſuffiſaunce/& graunt vs forgeuenneſſe of our outrageous treſpace and offence: For wel we knowe/ that your ſyuerall grace and mercy ſtretcheth ferther in to the goodneſſe/than don our outrageous gyltes and treſpaces in to the wickednesſe. Al be it ꝓ curſedly & dampnably we haue agylted againſt your high lordſhyp.

Than Melibee tooke hem vp fro the grounde ful benignly/ and receyued her excuſacions and her bondes by her othes vpon her pledges and borowes/ and aſſyned hem a certayn day to returne vnto his courte/ for to receyue and accept the ſentence and iugement ꝓ Melibeus wolde cõmaunde to be don on hem/by the cauſes aforſaid/which thynges ordayned/euery man returned to his houſe.

And whan dame Prudence ſawe her tyme/ ſhe frayned & aſked her lorde Melibe/what he gentyl he thought to take on his aduerſaries.

To

To whiche Melibe answered / & said: Certes (said he). I thynke and purpose me fully to dysherit them of al that euer they haue / and for to putte them in exyle for euer.

Certes said dame Prudēce / this were a right euyl sentence / and moche ayenst reason. For ye be riche ynough / and haue no nede of other mennes riches. And ye myght lyghtly in this wyse gete you a coueitous name / whiche is a vicious thyng / and ought be eschewed of euery good man. For after ye sayeng of the apostel. Couetise is rote of al harmes. And therfore it were better to you to lese so moch good of your owne / than for to take of their good in this maner. For better it is to lese good with worshyp / than to wyn good with vilanye and shame. And euery man ought to do his dylygence and his busynesse / to gete hym a good name. And yet shall he not onely busy hym in kepyng his good name / but he shal also enforce hym alwaye to do some thynge / by whiche he may renewe his good name. For it is written / that the olde good lose of a man or good name / is soone gone and past / whan it is not renewed. And as touchynge / that ye say that ye wol exyle your aduersaries: that thynketh me moche ayenst reason / and out of measure / consyderyng the power that they haue yeue you vpon them selfe. And it is written: ye he is worthy to lese his priuilege / that myssuseth the myght and power that is gyuen hym. And I sette case / ye myght enioyne hem that payne by right & lawe / whiche I trowe ye may nat do: I say / ye myght not put it to execution / for paraventure than it were lyke to tourne to the werre / as it was before. And therfore if ye wol that men do you obeysaūce / ye muste demean you more curteisly / that is to say: ye must yeue more easy sentences and iugement. For it is written: he that most curteisly cōmandeth / to him men moost obey. And therfore I praye you / that in this necessite and in this nede / ye caste you to ouercome your hert. For as Senec saith: he that ouercometh his hert / ouercometh twise. And Tullyus saith: there is nothyng so cōmendable in a great lorde / as whan he is debonaire & meke / and apeseth him lightly. And I pray you that ye wol nowe forbere to do longe vengeaunce / in such a maner / that your good name may be kepte and conserued / and that men may haue cause & matere to praise you of pyte & mercy: and that ye haue no cause to repent you of thyng that is done. For Senecke saith: he ouercometh in an euyll maner / that repenteth hym of his victorie. Wherfore I pray you / let mercy be in your hert / to theffecte and entent / that god almyghtye haue mercy vpon you in his last iugement. For saint Iames saith in his Epistell: iugement without mercy shal be do to hym / that hath no mercy of another wight.

Whan Melibe had herde the great resons and reasons of dame Prudēce / and her wise informations and techynges / his hert gan enclyne to the wyll of his wife: consyderynge her trewe entent / confirmed him anon and assented fully to worke after her counsaile: & thanked god / of whom procedeth al goodnesse and vertue / that him had sent a wife of so great discretion. And whan the day came that his aduersaries shulde appere in his presence / he spake to hem goodly / and said in this wyse.

Al be it so / that of your pride and high presumption and foly / and of your negligence & vnconnyng / ye haue misdone you / and trespaced vnto me / yet for as mikell as I se and beholde your great humilyte / and that ye be sory and repentaunt of your gilles / it constreyneth me to do you grace & mercy: Wherfore I receyue you to my grace / and forgiue you fully al the offences / iniuries / and wronges / that ye haue don ayenst me and myne / to the fyne and ende / that god of his endelesse mercy wol at the tyme of our dyeng forgyue vs our gilles / that we haue trespaced to him in this wrecched worlde. For doutlesse if we be sory and repentaunt for the synnes and gylles / whiche we haue trespaced in ye sight of our lorde god: he is so fre and so mercyable / that he wol forgyue vs our gilles / and bring vs to the blysse that neuer shal haue ende. Amen.

Here endeth the tale of Chaucer and here folowyth the Nonnes prologue.

Hy ended was the tale of Melibee
And of Prudence/ and her benignyte
Our Hoste sayd/ as I am faythful man
And by the precious corpus Madrian
I had leuer than a barel of ale
That Good lefe my wife had herde this tale
For she nothyng is of suche pacience
As was this Melibeus wife Prudence
By goddes bones/ whan I bete my shames
She bungeth me the great clubbed stanes
And crieth/ fie the doggen cherrishone
And breke bothe backe and euery bone
And if that any neighbour of myne
Wol not in churche to my wife enclyne
Or be so hardy/ to her to trespace
Whan she cometh home/ she rampeth in my face
And crieth false coward wreche thy wife
By corpus domini/ I wol haue thy knyfe
And thou shalt haue my distaffe/ and go spynne
Fro day to nyght/ she wol thus begynne
Alas she saith/ that euer she was shape
To wedde a milksop/ a coward ape
That wol be ouerlepde with euery wight
Thou darst not stonde by thy wyues right
This is my lyfe/ but if that I wolde fight
And out at dore/ anoon I mote me dight
And elles I am lost/ but if that I
Be lyke a wylde lyon/ fole hardy
I wot well she wol do me slee some day
Some neighbour/ and than go my way
For I am perilous with knyfe in honde
Al be it that I were not her wythstonde
For she is bigger in armes be my faythe
That shal he fynde/ that her mysdooth or saith
But streite be passe alway from this matere.
Quod he/ thou wyfe be stille/ I prey the here
For ye shal tel vs a tale trewly
Lo Rochester stondeth here fast by
Ride forth myn owen lorde/ breke not our game
But by my trouthe I knowe not your name
Wheder I shal cal you my lorde daun Johan
Or daun Thomas/ daun Robert/ or daun Alphon
Or of what house be ye/ by your father kyn
I prey you to god/ thou hast a ful fayre chyn
As a gentyl pasture there thou gost
Thou art not lyke a pynsent or a ghost
Upon my faythe thou arte some officere
Some worthy sergeant/ or some Lanterne
For by my fathers soule/ as to my deme
Thou art a mayster/ whan thou art at home
No poure clerke/ ne no poure nouyce
But a gouernour wary and wyse
And therwith of bracme and of bones
A wel farynge person for the nones
I prey to god yeue him confusyon
That first the brought in to religyon
Thou woldest be a trede soule a ryght
Haddest thou as great leue/ as thou hast myght
To performe al thy lust in engendrure
Thou haddest begoten many a creature
Alas/ why werest thou so wyde a cope
God yeue me sorowe/ and I were pope
Not only thou/ but euery mighty man
Though he were shore hyghe vpon his pan
Shulde haue a wyfe/ for al the world is lorn
Religyon hath take vp al the corne
Of tredyng/ and we bere sely men ben shrimpes
Of feble trees there cometh wreched impes
This maketh that our heires be so slender
And feble/ that they may not wel engender
This maketh that our wyues wol assay
Religyous folke/ for they may better pay
Of Venus paymentes/ than we may we
God wote no lussheburghs paye ye
But be not wroth my lorde/ though I play
Ful ofte in game a sothe haue I herde say.
This worthy monke toke al in patience
And sayd/ I wol do my diligence
As ferre as sowneth in to honeste
To tel you a tale/ ye two or thre
And if ye lyst to herken hyther warde
I wol you sayne/ the lyfe of sayne Edwarde
Or elles tragedyes first I wol tell
Of whiche I haue an hundred in my cell.
Tragedy is to tel a certayne story
As olde bokes maken memory
Of hem that stode in great prosperyte
And be fallen out of hye degre
In to myserye/ and ended wretchedly
And they ben verifyed comenly
Of syxe fete/ whiche may call exametron
In prose eke ben endyted many on
And in metre/ many a sondrie wyse
Lo/ this ongyst ynough to suffyse
Now herkeneth/ if you lyke for to here
But first I beseche you in this matere

Though

Though I be order tell nat these thynges
Be it of Popes/Emperours/or Kynges
After her ages/as men wytten fynde
But tellen hem/some before & some behynde
As it cometh now we to my remembraunce
Haue me excused of myne ignoraunce.

¶ Here endeth the Monkes pro-
logue/and here begyn-
neth his tale.

I wyl bewayle/in maner of tragedy
The harm of hem þ stoden in hye degre
And fyll/so that there nas no remedy
To bringe hem out of her aduersyte
For certayn/whan that fortune lyst to flye
There may no man of her þ course withholde
Lette no man trust on blynde prosperite
Beth ware by this ensample olde & olde

¶ Lucifer.

¶ At Lucifer/though he an angel were
And nat a man/at him wyl I begynne
For though fortune may nat angel dere
From hye degre/yet fel he for his synne
Down in to hel/where he is yet inne
O Lucifer/brightest of angels al
How art thou Sathanas/þ maist nat twynne
Out of myserye/in whiche thou arte fal

¶ Adam.

¶ Lo Adam/in the felde of Damascene
With goddes owne fynger wrought was he
And not begoten of mannes spermy vncleene
And welte al paradise sauyng o tree
Neuer worldly man had so hye degree
As Adam/tyl he for his misgouernaunce
Was dryuen out of his high prosperite
To labour and to hel/and to myschaunce.

¶ Sampson.

¶ Lo Sampson/whiche þ was annunciate
By the angel/longe or his natiuite
And was to god almighty conferrate
And stode in noblesse/whyle he myght se
Was neuer swich another/as was he
To speke of strength/and therto hardynesse
But to his wyues tolde he his secre (nesse
Thorugh whiche he slough hym self for wrecched-

Sampson/this noble & mighty champion
Without weppen/saue his handes two
He slough and al to rent the lyon
Toward his weddyng/walkyng by the wey
His false wyfe coulde him so plese & pray
Tyl she his counsayle knewe/& she vntrewe
Vnto his foes/his counsayle gan bewray
And him forsoke/and toke another newe

An hundred foxes tok Sampson for yre
And al her tayles he togyther bonde
And set the foxes tayles al on fyre
For he in euery tayle hath put a brande
And they brent al the cornes in that londe
And her olyues/and her vynes eke
A thousande men eke he slough with his honde
And had no wepen/but an asses cheke

Whan they were slayne/so thirsted him that he
Was wel nye lorne/for whiche he gan to pray
That god wolde of his payne/haue some pyte
And sende him drinke/or els mote he dey
And of this asses cheke/that was so drey
Out of a wange tothe/sprange anon a well
Of whiche he dronke ynough/shortly to sey
Thus halpe him god/as Iudicum can tell

By verey force/at Gasa on a nyght
Maugre the Philystens of that cite
The gates of the town/he hath vp plyght
And on his backe/pearced hem hath he
High on an hyll/where as men myght hem se
O noble mighty Sampson/lefe and dere
Had thou nat told to women thy secre
In al this worlde ne had be thy pere

This Sampson neither syder drinke ne wyne
Ne on his heed cam rasour none ne shere
By precepte of the messangere diuyne
For al his strength/in his herres were
And fully twenty yere by yere
Of Israel/he had the gouernaunce
But after soon shal he wepe many a tere
For women shal bringe him to myschaunce

Vnto his lemman Dalyda he tolde
That in his heres/al his strength lay
And falsely to his foes she him solde

And

And slepyng in her barme vpon a day
She made to clyppe or shere his heeres away
And made his fomey al his craefte espyen
And whan that they hym fonde in suche aray
They bounde hym faste/ and put out his eyen

But er his heeres were clypped or shaue
There was no bonde that might hym bynde
But now we is he put in prison in a caue
Where as they made hym at the querne grynde
O noble Sampson/ strongest of mankynde
O whylom nigh in glorie and rychesse
Now mayste thou wepe wt thyn eyen blynde
Sith thou art fro wele fal I to wretchydnesse

The ende of this caytife was/ as I shal sey
His fomey made a feest vpon a daye
And made hym/ as that foole vp fote hem play
And this was in a temple of great araye
But at last he made a foule afray
For he two pylers shoke/ & made hem fall
And doune fel the temple al/ and there it lay
And sloughe hym selfe/ and eke his fomey all

This is to say/ the princes euerychone
And eke thre thousade bodyes were there slayn
With fallyng of the great temple of stone
Of Sampson wol I no more sayne
Beth ware by this ensample olde and playne
That no men tel her counsaile to her wyues
Of such thyng as they wold haue secret fayne
If that it touche her lymmes or her lyues.

¶ Hercules.

O I Hercules/ the sourrayne conqueroure
Dyngen his werre/ I laude/ & hye renoun
For my bras tyme/ of strength he bare the floure
He slough and raafte the fyn of the lyoun
And of the Centaures/ fayde the boste adoun
He Harpyas slewe/ the cruel byrdes fell
He the golden appele raafte fro the dragon
He dere out Cerberus/ the haunde of hell

He slewe the cruel tyraunt Dyomede
And made his horse to frete his owne flesh & bone
He slough the very serpent Enemonde
Of Archadie the foule vnclene beste
And he slewe Cacus in a caue of stone
He slough the grymme Antheus the stronge
He slough the grisly bore/ and that anon
And bare his herd vpon his sperre longe

Was neuer wight/ sythe the worlde began
That slough so many monsters/ as dyd he
Through the wyde worlde/ his name ran
What for his strenght and his bounte
And euery realme went he for to se
He was so stronge/ þ no man might hym let
And at bothe worldes endes/ he Trophe
In stede of boũdes/ of brasse a pyllour set.

¶ A lemman had this noble champyon
That hight Deianire/ as fresshe as May
And as clerkes make mencion
She hath hym sent a shyrte fresshe and gay
Alas this shirte/ alas and wel a waye
Enuenomed was subtelly with all
That er he had weared it halfe a daye
It made his flesshe al fro his bones fall.

But natheles/ some clerkes her excusen
By one that hight Nessus/ that it mased
Be as be may/ I wol her not accusen
But on his body/ the shyrte he ware al nased
Upl the flesshe was with the venym stased
And whan he sawe none other remedye
In hote coles/ he hath hym selfe raked
For with no venym dayned he to dye

Thus fierse this worthy mighty Hercules
Lo/ who may truste in fortune any throwe
For hym that foloweth al this worlde of prees
Or he be ware/ is ofte layde ful lowe
Ful wyse is he/ that hym selfe can knowe
Beware/ for whan that fortune lyst to glose
Than wayteth she/ her man to ouerthrowe
By suche a waye/ as he wolde leest suppose.

¶ Nabugodonosor.

The mighty trone/ the princes tresore
The glorious septre/ & royal maieste
That had the kyng Nabugodonosor
With ioye herein may discryued be.
He wyse wanne Hierusalem/ that cyte
The vessel of the temple he with hym lad
At Babylon was his sourrayne se
In whiche his glorie and his delyte he had.

The fayreſt childʳen of the blode ropall
Of Hieruſalem/he dyd do gelde anone
And made eche of hem to bey his thrall
Amonge all other Danyell was one
That was the wyſeſt of euerychone
For he the dremes of the kyng expowned
Where as in Caldee clerkes were there none
That wyſt to what fyne his dreme ſowned

This proude kyng let make a ſtatu of golde
Sixty cubites longe/ and ſeuen in bredde
To whiche ymage/ bothe yonge and olde
Comaunded he to loute/and haue in dredde
Or ellys a furneys/ful of flames redde
He ſhulde be dedd/that wolde not obey
But neuer wolde aſſent to that dede
Danyell/ne his yonge felowes threy

This kyng of kynges/proude and elate
Wende god/ that ſytteth in maieſte
He might hym not byreue of his eſtate
But ſodaynly he loſte his dignyte
And lyke a beeſt/hym ſemed for to be
And ete hey as an oxe/and lay therout
In rayn/ with wylde beeſtis walked he
Tyll a certayne tyme was come aboute

And lyke an Egles fetheres were his herres
And his nayles lyke brides clawes were
God releued him at certayne yeres
And gaue hym wytte/ and than with many a tere
He thonked god/and all his lyfe in fere
Was he/ to do a myſſe/or more treſpace
And er that he layde was on his bere
He knewe ỳ god was ful of might & grace.

Balthaſer.

His ſonne/whiche ỳ hight Balthaſare
That helde ỳ reigne after his faders day
He by his father couthe not beware
For proude he was of herte/ and of aray
And eke an ydolaſtre was he aye
His hygh eſtate/aſſured him in pride
But fortune caſte hym downe/ & there he laye
And ſodaynly his reigne gan deuyde

A feeſt he made/vnto his lordes all
Vpon a tyme/ he made hem blythe be
And than his officers gan he call
Gothe bringe forthe the veſſels (quod he)
Whiche that my father/in his proſperyte
Out of the temple of Hieruſalem byraſte
And to our goddes thonken we
Of honour/ that our eldeʳs with vs laſte

His wyfe/his lordes/and his concubynes
Aye dronken/whyles her appetytes laſte
Out of this noble veſſels/ fondue wynes
And on a wall/this kyng his eyen caſte
And ſawe an hode armeleſſe/ that wrote faſte
For feare of whiche he quoke/ & ſyghed ſore
This honde ỳ Balthaſar made ſo ſore agaſte
Wrote (Mane techel phares) and no more

In al that londe magycyn was ther none
That coude expowne what this letter ment
But Danyell expowned it anone
And ſaid/kyng/ god thy father ſent
Glorie and honour/reigne/treſour/ & rent
And he was proude/ & nothing god he dred
And therfore great wrathe god vpon hym ſent
And hym byraſte the reigne that he had

He was out caſte of mannes compayne
With aſſes was his habytacion
And ete hey as a beeſt/in wete and drie
Tyll that he knewe/by grace and by reſon
That god of heuen hath dompnation
Ouer euery reigne/and euery creature
And than had god of hym compaſſyon
And hym reſtored his reigne and his figure.

Eke thou ỳ arte his ſonne/ art proude alſo
And knoweſt al theſe thynges pleynly
And arte rebell to god/ and his foe
Thou dranke eke of hes veſſels boldly
Thy wyfe eke/and thy wenches ſynfully
Dronke of the/ſame veſſels fondue wynes
And heryed falſe goddes curſedly
Therfore to the ſhapen great payne is

This honde was ſent fro god/ ỳ on the wall
Wrote (Mane techel phares) truſte me
Thy reigne is done/thou weyeſt not all
Deuyded is thy treaſure/and a ſhal be
To Medes and to Perſeins (quod he)
And that ſame night/the kyng was ſlawe

And

And Darius occupyed his dignyte
Thoughe he therto had neyther right ne lawe

Lordynges/ here ensample may we take
How that in lordshyp is no sykernesse
For whan that fortune wol a man forsake
She bereth away his regne/ and his richesse
And eke his frendes/ bothe more and lesse
And what man hath frendes/ through fortune
Hys hap wol make him enemyes I gesse
This proverbe is ful sothe/ and ful comune.

Zenobia.

Enobia of Palmerye quene
(As writeth Petrarcha of her noblesse)
So worthy was in armes/ and so kene
That no wight passed her in hardynesse
Ne in lynage/ ne in vertue eke gentylnesse
Of kynges blode of Perse she is descended
I say that she had not moste fayrnesse
But of her shape she might not be amended

From her childhode I fynde that she fledde
Offyce of woman/ and to woode she wente
And many a wylde hertes blode she shedde
With arowes brode/ that she to hem sente
She was so swyfte/ that she anoon hem hente
And whan that she was elder/ she wolde hyll
Lyons/ lebardes/ and berres al to rente
And in her armes wolde hem at her wyll

She durst wylde beestes bremes fede
And reste in the mountaynes al the nyght
And slepe vnder a bussh/ as she comlde eke
Wastful by hery foure/ and by hery myght
With any yonge man/ were he never so wight
There might no thyng in her armes stonde
She kepte her maydenhede from every wight
To no man dayned she to be bonde

But at laste/ her frendes hath her maryed
To Odenat/ a prince of that countre
Al were it so/ that she him longe taryed
And ye shal vnderstonde/ how we that he
Had suche fantasyes as had she
But nathelesse/ whan they were knyt in fere
They lyued in ioye and in felycite
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere

Save one thyng/ she nolde never assent
By no way/ that he shulde by her lye
But ones/ for it was her playne entent
To have a childe/ the worlde to multiplye
And also sone as she myght aspye
That she was not with childe with that dede
Than wolde she suffre him do his fantasye
Efte sones/ and not but ones out of drede

And if she were with childe at that caste
Nomore shulde he play that game
Tyl fully fourty dayes were paste
Than wolde she ones suffre him the same
Al were thes Odenat wylde or tame
He gate no more of her/ for thus she sayde
It was to wyues lechery and shame
In other caste/ if men with hem playde

Two sonnes by this Odenat had she
The whiche she kept in vertue and lettrure
But now vnto our tale turne we
I say that so worthyful a creature
And wyse therwith/ and large with mesure
So penyble in werre/ and curteys eke
Ne more labeure myght in werre endure
Was non/ though al this world me wold seke

Her ryche araye/ ne myght not be tolde
As wel in vessel as in her clothyng
She was al cladde in perry and in golde
And eke she lefte not for none huntyng
To have of sondrie tonges folke fro wyng
Whan that she leyser had for to entende
To lerne bokes was al her lykyng
How she in vertue her lyfe might dispende

And shortly of this storie for to treate
As doughty was her husbonde as she
So that they conquered many regnes great
In the Orient/ with many a fayre cyte
Appertenaunt vnto the maieste
Of Rome/ with strength helde them faste
Ne never myght her foe men do her flee
Al the whyle that Odenates dayes laste

Her batayles/ who so lyste hem for to rede
Agayne Sapor the kyng/ and other mo
And how al this proces fyll in dede
Tells Ely

Why she conquered/ & what tytle she had therto
And after of her mysheese and of her wo
Howe that she was besieged/and ytake
Let him to my mayster Petrarke go
That writeth ynough of this/ I vndertake

¶ Whan Odenat was deed/ she mightyly
The realmes helde/ & with her owne honde
Agaynst her foos she fought truely
That ther was no prince ne kyng/ in al ỳ lõde
But were glad/ if they that grace sonde
That she ne shulde vpon his londe werrey
With her they made alyaunce by bonde
To be in peace/ and let hem ryde and play

The emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne him before/ the romayne Galyen
Ne durste neuer be so corageous
Ne none Armeny/ ne none Egyptien
Ne Surrien/ ne none Arabyen
Within the felde/ that durst with her fyght
Leste ỳ she wolde hem with her hondes sleen
Or with her meyne/ put hem to flyght

In Lynges habyte went her sonnes two
As the heires of her realmes all
And Hermanno and Thamallo
Her names were/ as pereens hem call
But aye fortune/ hath in her hony gall
This mighty quene/ may no whyle endure
Fortune out of her reigne made her to fall
To wretchydnesse/ and to myfauenture.

¶ Aurelian/ whan that the gouernaunce
Of Rome came in his hondes twey
He shope vpon this quene to do vengeaunce
And with his legions/ he toke his wey
Towarde Zenobia/ and shortly for to say
He made her flye/ and at laste her hent
And fettered her/ and eke her chyldren tway
And wan the londe/ & home to Rome he went

Amonge other thynges that he wan
Her chare/ that of gold was wrought & pierre
This great Romayn/ this Aurelian
Hath with him ladde/ that for men shulde se
Before his trumphe walked she
With golden chaynes on her necke hongyng
Crowned she was/ as after her degre
And ful of pierre charged her clothyng

¶ Alas fortune/ she that whylom was
Dredful to kynges/ and to emperoures
Now gaureth al the people on her/ alas
And she that helmed was in starke stoures
And wan by force townes stronge/ & toures
Shal on her herd now were assayled
And she that bare the septre ful of floures
Shal beare a distaffe/ her cost for to quyte.

¶ Nero.

Al though that Nero were as vycious
As any fende/ ỳ lyth ful lo we adoun
yet he/ as telleth vs Suetonius
Al this worlde had in subiection
Vnto the este/ and west/ and Septentryon
Of rubyes/ sapheres/ and of perles whyte
Were al his clothes broudred vp and doun
For he in gemmes greatly gan delyte

More delycate/ more pompous of aray
More proude/ was neuer Emperour/ than he
That ilke clothe that he had weared o day
After that tyme/ he nolde it neuer se
Nettes of golde threde had he great plente
To fysshe in Tiber/ whan him lyst to play
His lustes were as lawe/ in his degre
For fortune as his frende wolde him obay

He Rome brente for his desyreye
The Senatours he slewe vpon a day
To here howe her wyues wolde wepe & crye
And sloughe his brother/ & by his fyster laye
His mother made he in a pytouse aray
For he her wombe let slytte/ to beholde
Where he conceyued was/ so wela way
That he so lytel of his mother tolde

No terres out of his eyen/ for that sight
He came/ but said/ a fayre woman was she
Great wonder is/ that he coude or myght
Ne domysman/ of her deed beaute
The wyne to bring him/ comaunded he
And dranke anon/ non other wo he made
Whan might is ioyned vnto cruelte
Alas/ to depe wyl the venyme wade

In

In ponthe a mayster had this emperour
To teche him lettrure/and curtesye
For of moralyte he was the floure
As my se tyme/ but of his bokes lye
And whyles his maister had of him maistrye
He made him so conning and so souple
That longe tyme it was or tyrannye
Or any vyce/ durste in him ancorple

Hester his mayster was/of whiche I deuyse
Dreamse Nero had of him suche drede
For he for his vyces wolde him chastyse
Discretly as by worde/ and not by dede
But he wolde say/an emperour mote nede
Be vertuouse/and hate tyrannye
For whiche he made him in a bathe to blede
On bothe his armes/tyl he must dye

This Nero had vse of a customaunce
In youthe/ayenst his mayster to vyse
Which afterwarde/him thought gret grenaunce
Dreamse he ofte wolde him chastyse
Therfore he made him dye in this wyse
To chose in a bathe to dye in this maner
Rather than to haue a nother turmentyse
And thus hath Nero slayne his mayster dere

¶ Nowe sel it so/that fortune lyste no longer
The hygh pride of Nero to cherysshe
For tho he were stronge/ yet was she stronger
She thought thus/ by god I am to nyce
To set a man/that is fulfylled of vyce
In hye degre/ and an emperour him call
By god out of his sete I wol him tryce
Whan he leste weneth/ soneste shal he fall

The people rose vpon him on a nyght
For his defaute/and whan he it aspyed
Out of his dores anon he hath him dyght
Alone/and there he wende haue ben alyed
He knocked faste/ a ape the more he cryed
The faster shette they the dores all
Tho wyste he wel/he had him selfe beguyled
And went his way/ no lenger durste he call

The people cryed & romsled up and down
That with his eres he herde howe they sayde
Where is this false tyraunt/this Neroun
For feare ful nere out of his wytte he brayde
And to his goddes/ right pitously he prayde
For socoure/but it nought hym helpe
For drede of this/him thought that he deyde
And ranne in to a gardeyn/ him to hyde

And in this gardayne/ founde he chaines twey
Hyltyng by a fyre great and reed
And to the chaines two he gan to prey
To slee him/ and to gryde of his heed
That to his body/ whan he were deed
Were no despyte done/ for his diffame
Him selfe he slough/he couthe no better rede
Of whiche fortune lough and had game.

¶ Holofernes.

Was neuer capitayne vnder a kyng
That reignes mo/ put in subiectyoun
Ne stronger was in feldе/of al thyng
As in his tyme/ne greater of renoun
Ne more pompous in hygh presumpcioun
Than Holopherne/ whiche fortune aye vyste
And so lyrozously sadde him vp and doun
Tyl that he deed was er that he wyste

Not only that this worlde had of him awe
For lesyng of rychesse and lyberte
But he made euery man reuye his sawe
Nabugodonosor was lorde/ sayd he
None other god shulde honoured be
Ayenst his hest/there dare no wight trespace
Saue in Bethulia/a stronge cyte
Where Eliachym was preest of that place

¶ But take kepe of the dethe of Holopherne
Amyd his host/ he dronke laye al nyght
Within his tent/large as is a berne
And yet for al his pompe/ & al his yught
Judith/a woman/as he lay vpright
Slepyng/his heed of smote/ and fro his tente
Ful prively she stale/ from euery wight
And with his heed/ vnto her towne she wente.

¶ Antiochus.

What nedeth it of lyng Antiochus
To tel his hygh and royall maieste?
His great pride/ his werke venemus
For suche an other man nas neuer as he
Redeth what that he was in Machabe

T.iii. And

And redeth the pronde wardes that he sayd
And why he fyll from his prosperyte
And in an hyll/ how we wretchedly he deyde

Fortune hym had enhaunsed so in pride
That verily he wende he might attayne
Unto the sterres/ vpon euery syde
And in a balaunce/ to wey eche mountayne
And al the floodes of the see restrayne
And goddes people had he moste in hate
Hem wolde he slee/ in turment and in payne
Wenyng that god ne might his pride abate

And for that Nychanore and Tymothe
By iewes were venquissshed mightyly
Unto the iewes suche an hate had he
That he bad greythe his chare ful hastely
And swore and sayd/ ful dispytously
Unto Hierusalem he wolde estsone
To wreke his yre on it ful cruelly
But of his purpose was he let ful sone

God for his manace hym sore smote
With invysible wounde/ aye incurable
That in his guttes carse so and bote
That his paynes were importable
And certainly the wreche was resonable
For many a mannes guttes dyd he payne
Ful from the purpose/ cursed & damnable
For al his sincrte/ he nolde hym not restrayne

But bade anon/ aparayle his hoste
And sodaunly/ or he thay was ware
God daunted al his pride/ & al his boste
For he so sore fel out of his chare
That al his lymmes and his syen to tare
So that he ne myght go ne ryde
But in a chayre/ men abonte hym bare
Al forbrused bothe backe and syde

The wreche of god hym smote so cruelly
That in his body wicked wormes crept
And therwith al he stanke so horribly
That none of al his meyne/ that hym kept
Whether that he woke or elis slept
Ne myght not of hym the stynke endure
And in his mischefe he wayled & ete wept
And pine we god/ lasde of euery creature

To al his hoste/ and to hym selfe also
Ful lothsom was the stynke of his carayne
No man might hym beare to ne fro
And in his stynke/ & in his horrible payne
He sterfe ful wretchedly on a mountayne
Thus hath this robbour/ and this homycide
That many a man made to wepe and playne
Suche guerdon/ as belongeth to pride.

¶ Alexander.

The story of Alexander is so comune
That euery wight/ that hath discretion
Hath herde somwhat or al/ of his fortune
This wyde worlde/ as in conclusyon
He wanne by strength/ and for his renoun
They were glad for peace vnto hym sende
The pride of man/ and boste he lasde adoun
Where so he came/ vnto the worldes ende

Comparyson might yet neuer be maked
Betwyxt hym/ and an other conquerour
For al this world/ for drede of hi hath quaked
He was of knyghthod/ & of fredome flour
Fortune hym made the heyre of high honour
Saue wyne & women/ nothig might aswage
His hygh entent in armes and labour
So was he ful of louyng corage

What prince were it to hym/ though I you tolde
Of Darius/ or of a hundred thousandes mo
Of princes/ erles/ and knyghtes bolde
Whiche he conquered/ and brought to wo
I say as ferre as a man may ryde or go
The world was his/ what should I more deuise
For though I wrote and tolde you euer mo
Of his knyghthode/ it might not suffyse

Twelue yere he reigned/ as I rede/ Macedoine
Philyppes sonne of Macedoine he was
That first was kyng of Grece/ that countre
O worthy gentyll Alexander/ alas
That euer shulde the fal suche a cas
Enpoysonned of thy folke thou were
Thy syce/ fortune hath turned in to an ace
And yet for the ne wepe she neuer a tere

Who shal yeue myn teres to complayne
The deth of gentilnesse/ and of fraunchise
That al the worlde walked in his demayne
And

And yet him thought it myght not suffyse
So ful was his corage of hygh empryse
Alas/who shal me helpe to endyte
False fortune/and poyson to despyse?
The whiche of al this wo I wyte.

¶ Julius Cesar.

BI wisdom/manhode/& hygh labours
From humble ded to royal maistrie
Up rose he/Julius the conquerours
That al the occident/by londe and see
Won by strength of honde/or elles by treté
And vnto Rome made hem tributary
And sythe of Rome/emperour was he
Tyl that fortune wex his aduersary

O mighty Cesar/that in Thessaly
Azenst Pompei/father thyn in law
That of the Orient had the chyualry
As fers as that the day begynneth to dawe
Thryes throughe knighthode hast take & slawe
Save fewe folke/wyth Pompeius fledde
Throughe which thou puttest al to outer ruyne a wawe
Thanke fortune/that so wel the spedde

¶ But now a lytel whyle I wol bewayle
This Pompei/this noble gouernour
Of Rome/whiche that fledde at this bataylle
I say one of his men/a false traytour
His hed of smote/to wynne him fauour
Of Julius/and to him the hed brought
Alas Pompei/of the orient conquerour
That fortune vnto suche a fyne the wrought

¶ To Rome azen repayreth Julius
With his triumphe laureate ful hye
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That euer had of his hye estate enuye
Ful priuely had made conspyracye
Azenst this Julius/in ful litel wyle
And cast the place/in whiche he shulde dye
With bodekins/as I shal you deuyse

This Julius vnto the capitol went
Upon a day/as he was wont to goone
And in the capitol/anon him hent
This false Brutus/and his other foone
And styked him with bodekins anoone
With many a wounde/& thus they let him lye
But neuer grutched he at no stroke but one
Or elles at two/but as he stode lye

So manly was this Julius of herte
And so wel loued estately honeste
That tho his deedly woundes sore smerte
His mantel ouer his hyppes caste he
For no man shulde se his preyuyte
And as he lay in dyeng on a traunce
And wyste verily that dye shulde he
Of honestly yet had he remembraunce

¶ Lucan to the this storie I recommende
And to Suetony/and Valery also
That of this storie writen word and ende
How that these conquerours two
Fortune was first a frende/& sythe a foe
No man truste vpon her fauour longe
But have her in a wayte for euermo
Witnesse on al the conquerours stronge.

¶ Cresus.

The ryche Cresus/whylom kyng of Lyde
Of whiche Cresus/Cirus sore him drad
Yet was he caught amydde al his pryde
And to brenne/men to the fyre him lad
But such a rayne down fro ye firmament shad
That quenyt the fyre/& made him to scape
But ere he came yet an gyen he had
Tyl fortune on the galowes made him gape

Whan he escaped was/he couthe not stent
For to begyn a newe araye agayne
He wende wel/for that fortune him sent
Such happe/ye he escaped through the rayne
That of his foes he might not be slayne
And eke a sweuen vpon a nyght he mette
Of which he was so proude/& eke so fayne
That in vengeaunce he al his herte sette

Upon a tree he was/as him thought
Ther Jupiter him wisshe/both bathe & lyde
And Phebus eke a fayre towel him brought
To dry him with/& therwith wept his pryde
And to his doughter/that stode him besyde
Which ye he knewe in hye sentence habounde
He bade her tell what it signyfyed
And she his dreme right thus dyd expounde

The

The tree (qd̄ she) the galous is to mene
And Jupiter betoseneth sno we and rayne
And Phebus/with his to well so clene
Betoseneth the sonne beames/ sothe to sayne
Thou shalte honged be/ father certayne
Rayne shal the wasshe/ & sonne shal the drye
Thus she warned him full plat & full playne
His doughter/that called was Phanye

And honged was Cresus the proude kyng
His ropal trone might him not auayle
Tragedye is none other maner thynges
Ne can in syngyng crye ne bewayle
But for that fortune alday wol assayle
With vnware strok/the regnes ỹ they proude
For whā men trusteth her/than wol she fayle
And couer her vyght face with a cloude.

¶ Peter of Spayne.

O noble/o worthy Petro/glory of Spayne
Whom fortune held so hygh in maieste
Wel ought men thy pytous dethe complayne
Out of thy londe/thy brother made the fle
And after at a siege by subtelte
Thou were betrayed/ & ladde vnto his tente
Where as he with his owne honde slewe the
Succedyng in thy regne and in thy rente

The felde of sno we/ w^t thegle of blacke therin
Caught with the lymrod/coloured as ỹ glede
He brewe this cursydnesse/ & al this synne
The wycked nesie was werker of this dede
Not Charles/Oliuer/that tok aye hede
Of trouthe and honoure/but of Armoury
Genilon Oliuer/ corrupt for mede
Brought this worthy kyng in suche a bryde.

¶ Petro kyng of Cypre.

O Worthy Petro/kyng of Cypre also
That Alysandre wan by high maistry
Ful many an hethen wroughtest thou wo
Of whiche thyn owne leges had enuy
And for no thyng/but for thy chyualrye
They in thy bed han slayn the by the morowe
Thus can fortune her whele gouerne & gye
And out of ioye bring men to sorowe

¶ Barnabo Vicoūte.

Of Myllan great Barnabo Vicoumte.
God of delyte/ & scourge of Lombardye
Why shulde I not thyn infortune accounte
Sens in astate thou clombest here so hye
Thy brothers sone/ that was thy double alye
For he thy nevewe was/ and sonne in lawe
Within his prison made the to dye
But why ne how wot I/ ỹ thou were slawe.

¶ Hugelyne of Pyse.

Of the erle Hugelyne of Pyse the langour
Ther may no longe tel for pyte
But specel out of Pyse stonte a toure
In whiche toure in prison put was he
And with him ben his speel children thre
The eldest scarsly fyue yere of age
Alas fortune/it was a greet cruelte
Suche brydes for to put in suche a rage

Dampned was he to dye in that prison
For Roger/whiche that bysshop was of Pyse
Had on him made a false suggestyon
Through whiche ỹ people gan vpon him ryse
And put him in prison/in suche a wyse
As ye haue herde/and meate & drynke he had
So smal/that vnnethe it may suffyse
And therwithal it was ful poore and bad

And on a day befel/ that in that houre
Whā that his meate wont was to be brought
The geyler shette the doores of the toure
He herde it wel/ but he spake right nought
And in his herte anon there fyl a thought
That they for hunger wolde do him dyen
Alas (qd̄ he) alas that I was wrought
Therwith the teeres fyl fro his eyen

This ponge sonne/ that thre yere was of age
Vnto him sayd/father father why do ye wepe
Whan wyl the geyler bring our pot age
Is there no morsel breed that ye do kepe
I am so hungry/that I may not slepe
Now we wolde god that I might slepe euer
Than shulde not hunger in my wombe crepe
There nys nothing but breed ỹ me were lever

Thus day by day/this childe began to crye
Fyl in his fathers armes adoun it laye
And sayd/farwel father I mote dye
And kyssed his father/and dyede the same day
And whan the wofull father dyd it sey

Fol

for wo/ his armes two he gan to byte
And said alas/ fortune and welaway
Thy falsse wheele/ my wo alway it wyte

His children wende/ that it for hunger was
That he his armes gnewe/ and not for wo
And said: father/ do nat so (alas)
But rather eate the flesshe vpon vs two
Our flesshe ye gaue vs/ taake our flesshe vs fro
And eate ynough/ right thus they to hym said
And after that within a day or two
They lapde hem in his lappe adoun/ & deyde

Thus ended is this mighty erle of Pise
Hys sclfe dispeyred eke/ for hungre starfe
From hegh estate fortune away hym carfe
Of this Tragedy/ it ought ynough suffyse
Who so wol here it in a longer wise
Redeth the great poete of Itayle
That hyght Daute/ for he can it al deuyse
Fro poynt to poynt/ nat a worde wol he fayle.

Here endeth the Monkes tale.

Here lyneth the knyght the monke of his tale/ and here foloweth the prologue of the Nonnes preest.

Ho (qd ꝑ knyght) good sir no more of this
That ye haue sayd/ is right ynough ꝑwys
And muche more/ for litel heuynesse
Is right ynough to muche folke/ I gesse
I saye for me/ it is a great disease
Where as men haue ben in welth and ease
To here of her sodeyne fal/ alas
And the contrary is ioye and solas
As whan a man hath ben in poore estate
And clymbeth vp/ and weyeth fortunate
And there abydeth in prosperite
Suche thynges is gladsome/ as thynketh me
And of suche thyng were good for to tell.
Ye (qd our Hoste) by seynt Poules bell
Ye say right sothe/ this Monke clappeth loude
He spake/ how fortune couered with a clowde
I wote not what/ and also of a Tragedy
Right now we ye herde/ and perdy no remedy
It is for to bewaylen/ ne complayne
That that is done/ and also it is a payne
As ye haue sayd/ to here of heuynesse
Sir mōke no more of this/ so god you blesse
your tale anoyeth al this company
Suche talkyng is not worth a butterfly
For therin is there no disporte ne game
Therfore sir monke/ dan Piers by your name
I pray you hertely/ tel vs somwhat elles
For sykerly/ nere clynkyng of your belles
That on your bridell houge/ on euery syde
By heuen kyng/ that for vs al dyde
I shulde er this han fal adowne for slepe
Al though the slough had ben neuer so depe
Than had your tale al be tolde in vayne
For certainly/ as that these clerkes sayne
Where as a man may haue none audyence
Nought helpeth it to tel his sentence
And wel I wote/ the substaunce is in me
If any thing/ shal wel reported be
Sir/ saye somwhat of huntyng I you pray
Nay (qd this mōke) I haue no lust to play
Now let an other tel/ as I haue tolde.
Thā spake our hoste/ wt rude speche & bolde
And said/ vnto the nonnes preest anon
Come nere thou preest/ cōe hider thou sir Johan
Tel vs such a thing/ as may our hertes glade
Be blythe/ though thou ryde vpon a iade
What though thy horse be bothe foule & lene
If he wol serue the/ reche not a bene
Loke that thy herte be mery euer mo
Yes sir (qd he) yes hoste/ so mote I go
But I be mery/ iwys I wol be blamed
And right anon/ his tale he hath atamed
And thus he said/ vnto vs euerychon
This swete preest/ this goodly man sir John.

Here endeth the prologue of the nonnes preest/ and here foloweth his tale.

A Poore wydowe/ some dele ystept in age
Was whilom dwelling i a pore cotage
Besyde a groue/ stondyng in a dale
This wydowe/ of whiche I tel you my tale
Sens the day that she was laste a wyfe
In patience/ ledde a ful symple lyfe
For lytel was her catel and her rent
By husbondrie/ of suche as god her sent
She fonde her selfe/ & eke her doughters two
Thre large sowes had she/ and no mo
Thre kyne/ & eke a shepe that hyght Malle
Wel sooty was her boure/ and eke her halle
In whiche she ete many a slender mele
Of poynant sauce/ ne knewe she neuer a dele
Ne depnty morcel passed through her throte
Her diet was accordaunt to her cote
Repleccion ne made her neuer syke
A temperate diete was her phisyke
And exercyse/ and hertes suffysaunce
The goute let her nothing for to daunce
Ne apoplexie shent not her heed
No wyne ne dranke she/ whyte ne reed
Her bord was most serued w^t whyte & blacke
Milke & broun breed/ in which she fode no lacke
Seynde bakon/ & somtyme an eye or twey
For she was as it were a maner dey.
¶ A perde she had/ enclosed al aboute
With stykes/ and drie dytched without
In whiche she had a cocke hyght Chauntecleere
In al the londe/ of crowyng nas his pere
His voyce was meryer than the mery orgon
On masse dayes/ that in the churches gon
Wel sykerer was his crowyng in his logge
Than is a clocke/ or in an abbey an orloge
By nature he knewe ech assencioun
Of the equinoctiall in the toun
For whan degrees .xv. were assended
Than crewe he/ that it might not be amended
His combe was redder than the fyne coral
And batelled/ as it had be a castel wall
His bylle was blacke/ as any geet it shone
Lyke asure were his legges and his tone
His nayles whyter than the lylly floure
And lyke the burned golde was his colour.
¶ This gentill cocke/ had in gouernaunce
Seuen hennes/ to done his plesaunce
Whiche were his sustres/ and his paramours
And wonder lyke to him/ as of colours
Of whiche the fayrest hewed in the throte
Was called fayre damosel Pertelote
He serued her ay honded tymes a daye
And she him pleaseth/ al that euer she maye
Curteys she was/ discrete/ and debonayre
And compenable/ and bare her selfe so fayre
Sens the tyme that she was sauynyght olde
That trulyche/ she hath the herte in holde
Of Chaunteclere/ lokyng in euery lyth
He loueth her so/ that wel was hym therwith
But suche a iape it was to here hem synge
Whan the bught sonne gan to springe
In swete accorde/ my lefe is ferre in londe
For that tyme/ as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes and briddes coude speke and synge
¶ And it so fyll/ that in the dawnyng
As Chaunteclere/ amonge his wyues all
Sate on his perche/ that was in the halle
And next him sate his fayre Pertelote
This Chauntecleere gan to grone in his throte
As a man in his dreme is drenched sore
And whan ỳ Pertelot thus herde him rore
She was agaste/ and sayd herte dere
What eyleth you to grone in this maneere
Ye be a very sleper/ fye for shame.
And he answerde thus/ by god madame
I pray you/ that ye take it not in greue
By god I mette/ I was in suche mischefe
Right nowe/ that yet myn herte is sore a fryght
Nowe god (qd he) my sweuen rede aryght
And kepe my body out of foule prisoun
Me mette/ that I romed vp and doun
Within our yerde/ where I sawe a beest
Was lyke an houde/ & wold haue made arrest
Vpon my body/ and wolde haue had me dad
His colour was betwyxt yelowe and red
And typped was his tayle/ & bothe his eres
With blacke/ vnlike the remenant of his heres
His snowte smale/ with glowyng eyen twey
Yet for his loke/ almoste for feare I dey
This causeth me my gronyng doutlesse.
¶ Auay (qd she) fye for shame hertelesse
Alas (qd she) for by god aboue
Nowe haue ye lost my herte/ & al my loue
I can not loue a coward by my faythe
For certes/ what so any woman sayth
We al desyre/ if that it myght be
To haue husbondes/ hardy/ wyse/ and fre

And

And ferde/and no wygarde/me no fole
Se how that is agaste of euery tole
Se nowe a mauntour/by that god alone
Howe durst ye say for shame/vnto your sone
That any swoune might make you a ferde:
Haue ye no mannes herte/and haue a berde?
Alas/and con ye be a ferde of swenens?
Nothing but vanyte god wotte in swenens is
Swenens ben engendred of repletions
And of fume/and of complections
Whan humours ben to habundant in a wight
Lette this derme/which ye herde nat to nyght
Ich you trouthe/ye may trust me
Cometh of superfluyte/and reed colour parde
Whiche causeth folke to drede in her drenmes
Of arowes/and of fyre with reed flemes
Of reed beestes/that wol han byte
Of contekt/and of warres great and lyte
Right as the humour of melancolye
Causeth many a man in slepe to crye
For fere of great bulles/and beres blake
Or elles that stronge develes wol hem take
Of other humours could I tel also
That worke a man in slepe moche wo
But I wol passe/as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton/whiche that was so wyse a man
Sayd he not thus/do no force of dremes
Nowe sir (qõ she) whan we flye fro þ bemes
For goddes loue/as taketh some laxatyfe
Vp peryll of my soule/and of my lyfe
I counsayle you the beste/I wol not lye
That bothe of colour/and of melancolye
Ye purge you/and for ye shul not tarye
Though in this toune/be none apotecarye
I shal my selfe two herbes techen you
That shal be for your hele/and for your prow
And in our yerde/the herbes shal I fynde
The whiche haue of hem proprete ful fynde
To purge you bynethe/and eke abouue
Forgete not this/for goddes owene loue
Ye be ful colerike of complexion
Ware the sawne in the ascencion
Ne fynde you nat repleet of humoures bade
For if ye do/I dare wel lay a grote
That ye shal haue a fever tertiane
Or elles an ague/that may be your bane
A day or two/ye shul haue digestyues
Of wormes/or ye take your laxatyues
Of laurell/centorie/and of fumetere
Or elles of ellebor/that growt there
Of catapuce/or of gaytres beryes
Of herbe yue/growyng/our yerde þ merry is
Pluckе hem vp as they growe/and eate hem in
Be merry husbonde/for your father kyn
Dredeth no drenne/I can say you no more.
Madame (qõ he) grameroy of your lore
But natheles/as touchyng dan Caton
That of wisdom hath so great renoun
Though he bade no dremes for to drede
By god/men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man/more of auctorite
Than ever Caton was/so mote I the
That all the revers sayth of his sentence
And haue wel founde by experyence
That dremes ben signifycations
As wel of ioye/as of tribulations
That folke endure/in this lyfe present
Ther nedeth to make of this none argument
The very preue sheweth it in dede
One of the greteste auctours that men rede
Sayth thus/ þ whilom two felowes went
On pylgrimage/in full good entent
And happed so/they come in to a toun
Where as there was swhe congregation
Of people/and eke of straunge herbygage
That they ne fonde/as moche as a cotage
In whiche they bothe might yloged be
Wherfore they mote of neccessyte
As for that nyght/departe company
And ech of hem gothe to his hostelry
And toke his lodgyng/as it wolde fall
That one of hem/was lodged in a stall
Farre in a yerde/with oxen of the plough
That other man was lodged wel ynough
As was his auenture/or his fortune
That us gouerneth al/as in comune
And so befell/longe or it were day
This man mette in his bedde/there as he lay
How that his felowe gan vpon him call
And sayd (alas) for in an oxes stall
This nyght shal I be murdred/there I lye
Nowe helpe me derre brother or I dye
In al haste/come to me (he said)
This man out of his slepe for fere abrayde
But whan he was waked of his slepe
He turned him/and toke of this no kepe

Him

Him thought his dreme was but a vanyte
Thus twyse in his slepe dremed he
And at the thirde tyme/ yet his felawe
Cam as him thought/ and sayd I nowe am slawe
Beholde my blody woundes/ depe and wyde
Aryse up erly/ in the morowe tyde
And at the west gate of the towne (quod he)
A carte ful of donge/ there shalte thou se
In whiche my body is hydde ful preuely
Do thou that carte arreste boldly
My golde caused my dethe/ sothe to sayne
And told him euery poynt how he was slayn
With a ful pytous face/ pale of hewe
And trust wel his dreme/ he fonde right trewe
For on the morowe/ as sone as it was day
To his felowes inne/ he tolde the waye
And whan that he came to the oxes stall
After his felowe/ he began to call.
The hostelere answerde him anon
And said/ sir your felowe is gon
As sone as it was day/ he went out of ȳ toun
This man gan fall in suspectioun
Remembring of his dremes that he mette
And forthe he gothe/ no lenger wolde he lette
Unto the westgate of the towne/ and fonde
A donge carte/ as it were to donge fonde
That was arayed in the same wyse
As ye haue herde the deed man deuyse
And with hardy herte/ he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and iustyce of this felonye
My felowe murdred is this same nyght
And in this carte he lythe/ gapyng vpright
I crye out on the mynystres (quod he)
That shulde kepe and rule this cyte
Harowe alas/ here lythe my felowe slayne
What shulde I more of this tale sayne?
The people out sterte/ and rost ȳ carte to grounde
And in the myddell of the donge they founde
The deed man/ that murdred was al newe.
O blyssful god/ that arte so good and trewe
Lo/ howe thou bewrayest murdre alway
Murdre wol out/ that se we day by day
Murdre is so wlatsome and abhominable
To god/ that so iuste is and reasonable
That he ne wol it suffre healed to be
Though it abyde a yere/ two/ or three
Murdre wol out/ this is my conclusyoun.
And right anon/ the mynystres of the toun
Haue hente the carter/ and sone him pyned
And eke the hostelere so sore engyned
That they beknewe her wickednesse anone
And were hanged by the nekke bone
Here may ye se/ that dremes ben to drede.
And certes/ in the same sefe I rede
Right in the next chapiter after this
I gabbe not/ so haue I ioye and blys
Two men wolde haue passed ouer the se
For certayne causes/ in to a ferre countre
If the wynde ne had be contrarye
That made hem in a cyte to tarye
That stode ful mery vpon an hauen syde
But on a daye/ a yenst an euen tyde
The wynde gan chaunge/ and blewe as hem lyst
Joly and glad/ they went to rest
And rosen hem ful erly for to sayle
But herken/ to one man fyl a great mervayle
That one of hem/ in slepyng as he lay
He met a wonders dreme/ agayn the day
Him thought a man stode by his beddes syde
And him comaunded/ that he shulde abyde
And sayd him thus/ if thou to morowe wende
Thou shalte be drenyt/ my tale is at an ende.
He woke/ and tolde his felowe what he mette
And prayed him his voyage for to lette
As for that day/ he prayed him for to abyde.
His felowe/ that lay by his beddes syde
Gan for to laugh/ and scorned him ful faste
No dreme (quod he) may so my herte agaste
That I wol let for to do my thynges
I set not a strawe for thy dremynges
For swevenes ben but vanytees and iapes
Men dreme alday of owles and of apes
And eke of many a mase therwithall
And dremen of thing that neuer was/ ne shall
But sythe I se that thou wolte here abyde
And thus sleuthe wilfully thy tyde
God wote it rueth me/ and have good day
And thus he toke his leue/ and went his way
But er he had halfe the course ysayled
I not why/ ne what myschaunce it ayled
But casually the shyppes bottome to rent
And shyp and men/ vnder the water went
In syght of other shyppes besyde
That with him sayled at the same tyde
And therfore sayde Pertelote so dere
By suche ensamples olde mayste thou lere

That

That no man shulde be to recheleſſe
Of dremes/ for I ſay the douteleſſe
That many a dreme ful ſore is for to drede
Lo in the ſyde of ſayne kenelm we rede
That was kenelphus ſonne/ the noble kyng
Of Mercenrike/ how kenelm mette a thyng
A lyte er he were murdred on a day
His murder in his bedde he ſay
Hie nonne hym eyppowned it euery deele
His ſweuen/ and bidde hym kepe hym wele
Fro traiſon/ but he was but ſeuen yere olde
And therfore lyte take he therof tolde
Of any dreme/ ſo holy was his hert
By god/ I had rather than my ſhert
That ye had herde his legende/ as haue I
Dame Pertelot/ I ſay to you trewly
Macrobeus/ that writeth the auiſion
In Affryke/ of the worthy Cipion
Affermeth dremes/ and ſaith that they ben
Warnyng of thynges/ that we after ſen
And ſartermore I pray you loketh wel
In the olde Teſtament/ of Daniel
If he helde dremes for vanyte
Rede eke of Joſeph/ and there ſhal ye ſe
Wondere ben ſometyme/ but I ſay nat al
Warnyng of thynges/ that after ſhal fal.
¶ Lo of Egipt the kyng/ that hight Phanao
His Baker/ and his Butteler alſo
Whether they felte non effecte in dremes?
Who ſo wol ſeke actes of ſondry remes
May rede of dremes a wonder thyng
Lo Croſus/ whiche was of Lyde kyng
Wende he not that he/ ſate vpon a tree
Whiche ſignifyed he ſhulde honged be
Lo Adromeda/ that was Hectors wife
That day that Hector ſhulde leſe his lyfe
She dremed in the ſame nyght before
How the lyfe of Hector ſhulde be loſte
If that day he went vnto batayle
She warned hym/ but it might not auayle
He went for to fyghte nathyleſſe
But he was ſlayne anon of Achilles
But that tale is to long to tel
And eke it is nigh day I may not dwel
Shortely I ſay/ as for conclusion
That I ſhal haue of this auiſion
Adeerſite: and I ſay furthermore
That I ne tel of laxatyues no more
For they ben venemous/ I wote it wele
I hem deſye/ I loue hem neuer a dele
But let vs ſpeke of myrthe/ and ſtynte al this
Madame Pertelot/ ſo haue I blys
Of one thyng god hath me ſent large grace
For whan I ſe the beautie of your face
Ye be ſo ſcarlet reed aboute your eyen
It maketh al my dredde for to dyen
For alſo ſykerly as In principio
Mulier eſt hominis confuſio.
¶ Madame/ the ſentence of this latyn is
Woman is mannes ioye and his blis
For whan I fele on nyght your hoote ſyde
Al be it that I may not on you ryde
For that our perche is made ſo narowe alas
I am ſo ful of ioye and of ſolas
That I deſye bothe ſweuen and dreme
And with ỹ worde he flew downe fro ỹ beme
For it was day/ and eke his hennes all
And with a chuckle/ he gan hem for to call
For he had founde a corne lay in the yerde
Royal he was/ and no more a ferde
He feddred Pertelot twenty tyme
And tradde her eke as oft/ er it was prime
He ſtoketh as he were a grymme leoun
And on his toes he romed vp and doun
Him deyned not to ſet his fete to the grounde
And chuckled/ whan he had a corne ifounde
And to hym than ran his wyues all
As royal as a prince in his hall
Leaue I this Chaunteclere/ in his paſture
And after wol I tell of his auenture.
¶ Whan ỹ monthe/ in whiche ỹ worlde began
That hight Marche/ ỹ god firſt made man
Was complete/ and paſſed were alſo
Sythe Marche began/ twenty dayes and two
Befyl that Chaunteclere/ in al his pride
His ſeuen wyues walkyng hym beſyde
Caſte vp his eyen to the bright ſonne
That in the ſigne of Taurus was ironne
Fourty degrees and one/ and ſomwhat more
He knewe by kynde/ and by none other lore
That it was prime/ and crew wt a blisful ſtemen
The ſonne he ſayd is clombe vp to the heuen
Fourty degrees and one/ and ſomwhat more I wys
Madame Pertelot/ my worldes blyſſe
Herken how merily this blisful bryddes ſynge
And ſe the freſſhe flowres how they ſpringe

Ful is myne hert of reuel/ and solas
But sodainly him fel a sorouful caas
For euer the later ende of ioye is wo
God wote/ worldly ioye is soone ago
And if a rethore ronde faire endite
He in a cronycle myght saufely write
As for a souerayne notabilyte
Nowe euery wise man herken to me
This storie is al so trewe I vndertake
As is the boke of Launcelot du Lake
That women holde in ful great reuerence
Nowe wol I turne ayen to my sentence.
¶ A trol foye (ful of sleight and iniquite)
That in the grove had wonned yeres thre
By hygh ymagynacion a forne caste
The same nyght/ through the hedge braste
In to the yerde/ there Chaunteclere the faire
Was wonte and eke his wyues to repaire
And in a bedde of wortes stylle he lay
Tyl it was passed vndren of the day
Waytyng his tyme/ on Chaunteclere to fall
As gladly done these homycides all
That in a wayte lye to murdre men
O falsse murderer/ rucking in thy den
O newe Scariot/ and newe Genylon
Falsse dissymuler/ O greke Synon
That broughtest Troy vtterly to sorowe
O Chaunteclere/ acursed be the morowe
That thou in thy yerde flewe from ꝑ bemes
Thou were ful wel warned by thy dremes
That ilke day was perylous to the
But what ꝑ god afore wote/ must nedes be
After the opynion of certayne clerkes
Witnesse of him/ that any clerke is
That in scholes is great altercation
In this mater/ and great disputacion
And hath ben/ of an hundred thousande men
But I ne can not bolte it to the bren
As can the holy doctour saynt Austyn
Or Boece/ or the bysshop Bradwardyn
Whether that goddes worthy forewetyng
Streyneth me nedely to do a thyng
(Nedely clepe I symple necessyte)
Or if the fre choyce be graunted me
To do that same thyng/ or do it nought
Though god forwote it/ or it was wrought
Or if his wetyng streyneth neuer a dele
But by necessyte condycionele

I wol not haue to done of suche maters
My tale is of a cocke/ as ye shal here
That toke his counsayle of his wyfe with sorowe
To walke in the yerde vpon the morowe
That he had met the dreme/ as I you tolde
Womens counsayles ben ful ofte colde
Womens counsayle brought vs first to wo
And made Adam fro paradise to go
There as he was ful merry/ and wel at ease
But for I not/ whom I myght displease
If I counsaile of women wolde blame
Passe ouer/ I said it my my game (as
Redeth authors/ wher they trete of fame
And what they say of women/ ye maye here
These ben the cockes wordes/ and not myne
I can of women no harme deuyne.
¶ Faire in the sonde/ to bathe her merily
Lith Pertelot/ and al her sustres by
Agenst the sonne/ and Chaunteclere so free
Songe merier/ than the mermayde in the se
For Phisiologus sayth certenly
How that they synge wel and merily
And so befyl/ as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a butterflye
He was ware of this faye that laye ful lowe
Nothyng than lyst him for to crowe
But cryed cocke cocke/ and vp he sterte
As one that was affrayde in his herte
For naturally/ a beestes desyreth to flye
Fro her contrary/ if he may it se
Tho he neuer erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere/ whan he gan him espye
He wolde haue fledde/ but the fox anone
Said gentyl sir/ alas: what wol ye done?
Be ye affrayde of me/ that am your frende?
Nowe certes: I were worse than a fende
yf I to you wolde harme/ or vilany
I am not come your counsaile to espye
But trewly the cause of my comyng
Was onely to here how ye syng
For sothly ye haue as mery a stevene
As any angel hath/ that is in heuen
Therwith ye haue of musyke more felyng
Than had Boece/ or any that can syng
My lorde your father/ god his soule blesse
And eke your mother/ of her gentylnesse
Haue in my house ben/ to my great ease
And certes sir/ ful fayne wolde I you plese.

But

But for my speken of syngyng/ I wol sey
So mote I brouke my wel myn eyen tweye
Saue pou/ne herde I neuer man so synge
As dyd pour father in the morwenynge
Certes it was of herte/ al that he songe
And for to make his voyce more stronge
He wolde so payne hym/ þ with both his eyen
He muste wynke/ so loude he muste cryen
And stonden on his typtoes ther withall
And stretche forthe his necke/ longe and small
And eke he was of swiche discrecion
That ther was no man in no regnon
That hym in songe or wysdom myght passe
I haue wel rad in dan Burnell the asse
Among his verses/ how þ there was a cocke
For that a preestes sonne paue hym a knocke
Upon his legges/ whyle he was yonge & nyce
He made hym for to lese his benefyce
But certayne there is no comparyson
Betwyxt the wysdom and discrecion
Of pour father/ and of his subtylte
Now syngeth sir/ for saynte charyte
Let se/ can ye pour father counterfete.
¶ This Chaunteclere his wynges gan to bete
As a man that coulde not his treson aspye
So was he ravysshed with his flaterye
Alas ye lordes/ many a false flatterour
Is in pour courte/ & many a false lesyngour
That plesse pou wel more/ by my sayth
Than he that soth sayth vnto you sayth
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterye
Beware ye lordes of her trecherye.
¶ This Chaunteclere stode hye vpon his toos
Strechyng his necke/ & helde his eyen cloos
And gan to crowe loude for the nonne
And dan Russell the foxe sterte vp at onces
And by the gorge hent Chaunteclere
And on his backe to warde þ wode hym bere
For yet was there no man that hym sued
O destynie/ that mayst not be eschued
Alas that Chaunteclere flewe fro the bemes
Alas his wyfe ranght not of dremes
And on a fryday fell al this mischaunce
O Venus that arte goddesse of plesaunce
Sithens þ thy seruaūt was this Chaunteclere
And in thy seruyce dyd al his powere
More for delyte/ than the worlde to multiplye
Why woldest þ" suffre hym on thy day to dye?
¶ O Gaufryde/ dere maystir souerayne
That whā þ worthy kyng Richard was slayn
With shot/ complaynedest his dethe so sore
Why ne had I nowe thy sentence and thy lore
The fryday for to chyde/ as dyd pe
For on a fryday/ sothly slayne was he
Thā wold I shewe pou how þ I coude playn
For Chaunteclerres drede/ and for his payne.
¶ Certes swiche cryes/ ne lamentacion
Was neuer of ladyes made/ whan that Ilion
Was won/ & Pirrus with his brighte swerde
Whan he hent kyng Priam by the herde
And slough him (as sayth Eneidos)
As made al the hennes in the cloos
Whan they had lost of Cantecleere the spyght
But soueraynly dame Pertelote shright
Wel louder than dyd Hasdruballes wyfe
Whan that her husbonde had lost his lyfe
And that the Romayns had brent Cartage
She was so ful of turment and of rage
That wylfully in to the fyre she sterte
And brent herselfe/ with a stedfaste herte.
¶ O wofull hennes/ right so cryed pe
As whan that Nero brent the cyte
Of Rome/ cryed the senatours wyues
For that her husbondes shulde lese her lyues
Withouten gylte Nero hath hem slayne
Now wol I turne to my tale agayne.
¶ The sely wydowe/ & her doughters two
Herde the hennes crye and make wo
And out at the dore sterte they anon
And sawe the foxe toward the wodde gon
And bare vpon his backe the cocke away
And cryed out haro we and wel a way
A ha the foxe/ and after hym they ran
And eke with staues/ many a nother man
Ran Colle our dogge/ Talbot/ & eke garlonde
And Malkyn/ with her dystaffe in her honde
Ran cowe & calfe/ and eke the very hogges
For they so sore a ferde were of the doggys
And shoutyng of men/ and of women eke
They ran so/ her herte thought to breke
They yelleu as fendes do in hell
The dukes cryed/ as men wolde hem quell
The geese for feare flewe ouer the trees
Out of the hyues came the swarme of bees
So hydous was the noyse/ a benedicite
Certes Jacke Strawe/ ne his meyne

Ne made neuer shoutes halfe so shrill
Whan that they wolde any flemmyng kyll
As that day was made vpon the foye
Of brasse they blewe the trompes & of boye
Of houe & vone/ which they blew & pouped
And therwith they shoked and shouted
It semed/as though heuen shulde fall
Nowe good men I pray you herken all.
Lo how fortune turneth sodainly
The hope and the pride of her enemy
This cocke that lay vpon the foyes backe
In al his drede/ vnto the foye he spake
And said/ sir: if I were as ye
yet shulde I say/ as wyse god helpe me
Turneth ayen/ ye proude churles all
A very pestylence vpon you fall
Nowe am I come vnto this woodes syde
Maugre youre heed/ the cocke shal here abyde
I wol him crete in mi sayth/ and that anone
The foye answerd/ in sayth it shal be done
And as he spake the worde/ al sodainly
This cocke brake from his mouthe delyuerly
And hygh vpon a tree he flewe anon
And whan the foye sawe that he was gon
Alas (qd he) o Chaunteclere alas
I haue (qd he) do to you trespas
In as moche as I made you aferde
Whā I you hent/ & brought out of youre yerde
But sir/ I dyd it not in no wicked entent
Come downe/ & I shal tel you what I ment
I shal you say sothe/ god helpe me so.
Nay than (qd he) I shrewe vs bothe two
And first I shrewe my self/ both blode & bones
If thou begyle me ofter than ones
Thou shalte no more with thy flaterye
Do me synge with a wynkyng eye
For he that wynketh/ whan he shulde se
Al wylfully/ god let him neuer thee.
Nay (qd ỹ foye) but god yeue him mischāce
That is so indiscrete of gouernance
That ieopardeth/ whan that he shulde haue pees.
Lo/ suche it is for to be recheles
And negligent/ and trust on flaterye
But ye that holde this tale a lye
As of a foye/ of a cocke/ and of a hen
Taketh the moralyte good men
For saynt Poule sayth/ al that writen is
To our doctryne it is writen iwys
Taketh the fruite/ and let the chaffe be styll
Nowe good god/ if that it be thy wyll
As sayth my lorde/ so make vs al good men
And bringe vs to thy hygh blysse. Amen.

Here endeth the tale of the nonnes preest/ and here folowth the Wyfe of Bathes prologue.

Sir nonnes preest/ our hoste sayd anone
yblessed be thy brethe and euery stone
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere
But by my trouthe/ if thou were seculer
Thou woldest be a tredfoule a ryght
For if thou haue corage/ as thou hast mygh
Thee were nede of hennes/ as I wene
ye more than seuen tymes seuenteene
See whiche brawnes hath this gentil preest
So great a nerke/ and suche a large breest
He loketh as a sperhauke with his eyen
Him nedeth not his colours for to dyen
With brasyl/ ne with grayne of Portyngale
But sir/ sayre fall you for your tale
And after that/ he with ful mery chere
Sayd to a nother man/ as ye shal here.
Wote ye not where standeth a litel towne
Whiche that is called Bob vp and downe
Vnder the blee/ in Caunterbury way
There gan our hoste to iape and to play
And said/ sirs: what? dunne is in the myre
Is there no man/ for prayer ne for hyre
That wol awake our felowe behynde
A theef him myght ful lightly robbe & bynde
See how he nappeth/ se for cockes bones
How he wol fal from his horse at ones
Is that a cook of London/ with mischaunce
Do him comfort/ he knoweth his penaunce
For he shal tel a tale by my fey
Al though it be not worthe a botel of hey
Awake thou cook (qd he) god yeue the sorowe
What ryleth the to slepe by the morowe
Hast thou had fery al night/ or art thou dronke
Or hast thou al night with sorry queen iswonke
So that thou mayst not holde vp thyn heed.
This cook that was ful pale/ & nothing red
Said/ sir hoste: so god my soule blesse

Thou

There is ful on me great heuynesse
But I not why/me were leuer to slepe
Than the best gallon of wyne ye shepe
Wel (qõ the Manciple) if it may do ese
To the sir cõe/and to no wight displese
Whiche that here ryde in this compayne
And that our hoste wyl of his curtesye
I wol as now excuse the of thy tale
For in good sayth thy visage is ful pale
Thyn eyen base/sothely as me thynketh
And wel I wote/ thy breth ful sowre stynketh
That sheweth wel thou arte not wel disposed
Of me certayne thou shalt not be glosed
He howe he gapeth/ to this dronkery wight
As though he wolde vs swalowe anon right
Holde close thy mouthe/by thy father kyn
The dyuel of hell set his fote therin
Thy cursed brethe wyl enfecte vs all
Fye stynking swyne/fye foule mote the befal
Lo(qõ he) sire/ wol ye lyste at the wyn
Therto me thynketh ye be wel shapen
I trowe that ye haue dronken wyne ape
And that is whan men play at strawe.
And wt his speche the cõe wexed al wrawe
And on the manciple he gan to nodde faste
For lacke of speche: to bo wyth his horse hym caste
Where as he lay/tyl that men hym vp take
This was a fayre chyuesaunce of a cõe
Alas that he ne had holde hym by his ladyll
And er that he ayen were in the sadyll
There was a great showyng to and fro
To lyfte hym vp/and moche care and wo
So vnwelcly was this selly palled goste
And to the Manciple than spake our hoste.
Vnkunne that dronke hath domynation
Vpon thin man/by my saluation
I trowe he loueth wel he tel his tale
For were it wyne/or olde moysty ale
That he hath dronke/ he spekeith so in the nose
And spyneteth fast/and eke hath the pose
He also hath to do more than ynough
To kepe hym on his capte out of the slough
And if he fal from his capte ese sone
Than shal we al haue ynough to done
In lyfteyng vp his dronken corse
Tel on thy tale/of hym make I no force
But yet Manciple/in sayth thou art to nyce

Thus openly to reprene hym of his vice
An other day he wol paraventure
Reclayme the/and bring the to lure
I mene he spekeith wyl of smale thynges
And for to pryche at thy rechynges
That were not honest/if it came to prefe.
Ha(qõ the maciple) it were a gret mischefe
So myght he bynge me in to the snare
yet had I leuer pay for the mare
Which he ryden on/thã he shuld wt me stryue
I wol not wrathe hym/so mote I thryue
That I spake/I sayd it but in bourde
And wote ye what/I haue here in my gourde
A draught of wyne/ye of a ryper grape
And right anon ye shal se a good iape
This cõe shal drinke therof/if I maye
Vp payne of my lyfe he wol not say naye
And certainly/to tellen as it was
Of thin vessell the cõe dranke faste/alas
What nedeth it/he dranke ynough before
And whan he had poured in his horne
To the Manciple he toke the gourde agayne
And of the drinke the cõe was ful fayne
And thonked hym/in suche wyse as he coude
Than gan our hoste to laugh wonder loude
And sayd: I se wel it is necessary
Wher that we goy/good drinke with vs to cary
For that wyl turne rancoure and disese
To accorde a lorde/and many a worde to pese
O Bacchus/ yblessed be thy holy name
That so canste turne ernest in to game
Worshyp and thonke be to thy deite
Of that matere ye get no more of me.
Tel on thy tale thou Maciple/I the pray
Wel sir (qõ he) herkeneth what I say.

Here endeth the Manciples prologue/ and here followeth his tale.

Hay Phebus dwelled here in erth adoun
As olde bokes make mencioun
He was the moste lusty bacheler
Of al the worlde/ and eke the best archer
He slough Pheton the serpent/as he lay
Slepyng ayenst the sonne vpon a day
And many a nother noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wrought/as mē mowe rede
Play he coulde on euery mynstralcye
And synge/ that it was a melodye
To here of his clere voyce the soun
Lettes the kyng of Thebes/Amphion
That with his songe/walled the cyte
Coude neuer synge halfe so wel as he
Herto he was the semelyst man
That is or was/sythe the worlde began
What nedeth it his feture to discryue?
For in this worlde nas none so fayre a lyue
He was therwith fulfylled of gentylnesse
Of honoure/and of perfyte worthynesse
This Phebus/ ỳ was floure of bachelerye
As wel in fredome/as in chyualrye
For his disporte/in signe eke of victory
Of Pheton/so as telleth vs the story
Was wonte to beare in his honde a bowe
Now had this Phebus in his house a crowe
Within a cage ifostred many a daye
And taught it speche/as men teche a iaye
Whyte was this crowe/as is a whyte swan
And countrefete the speche of euery man
He coulde/ whan he shulde tel a tale
Ther was in al this worlde no nyghtyngale
Ne coulde/ by an hundred thousande dele
Synge so wonderly mery and wele
Nowe had this Phebus in his house a wyfe
Whiche that he loued more than his lyfe
And nyght and day/dyd euer his diligence
Her for to plese/ and do her reuerence
Saue oncly/if I the sothe shal sayne
Jelous he was/ & wolde haue kept her fayne
For him were lothe/iaped for to be
And so is euery wight/in suche degre
But al for naught/for it auayleth nought
A good wyfe/that is clene of werke & thought
Shulde not be kept in none awayte certayne
And trewly the labour is in vayne
To kepe a shrewe/for it wol not be
This folde I for a very vpcaste
To spyll labour/ for to kepe wyues
Thus writen olde clerkes in her lyues
But nowe to purpose/as I first began
This worthy Phebus/dothe al that he can
To plese her/wenyng through suche plesaūce
And for his manhode/ & for his gouernaūce

That

That no man shulde put him from her grace
But god it wote/there may no man enscure
To gouerne a thyng/whiche that nature
Hath naturally set in a creature
Take any byrde/and put him in a cage
And do al thyn entent/and thy corage
To fostre it tenderly with meate and drinke
Of al daynties that thou canste bethynke
And kepe it also cleanly as thou may
Al though the cage of golde be neuer so gay
Yet had this byrde/by twenty thousande folde
Leuer in a forest/that is wylde and colde
Go ete wormes/and suche wretchydnesse
For euer this byrde wyl do his besynesse
To reskape out of his cage/whan he maye
His pyterte the byrde despyteth aye.
Let take a catte/& foster her with mylke
And tender flesshe/& make her couche of sylke
And let her se a mouse go by the wall
Anon she weyueth flesshe/& couche/and all
And euery deynte/that is in that house
Suche appetyte hath she to ete the mouse
Lo here hath lyste his dominacion
And appetyte fleeneth discrecion.
A she wolfe/hath also a vylanous kynde
The leudest wolfe that she may fynde
Or leeste of reputacion/that wol she take
In tyme whan her lyste to haue a make
Al these ensamples speke I by these men
That ben vntrue/& no thyng by women
For men haue euer a lycorouse appetyte
On lowe thyng/to performe her delyte
Than on her wyues/be they neuer so fayre
Ne neuer so trewe/ne so debonayre
Flesshe is so newfangel/with mischaunce
That we ne conne in no thyng haue plesaunce
That sowneth vnto vertue/any whyle.
Thus Phebus/whiche thought no gyle
Discreued was/for al his tolyte
For vnder him an other had she
A man of lytell reputacion
Nought worthe to Phebus/in comparyson
The more harme is/it happeth ofte so
Of whiche there comyth mochel harme & wo
And so befel/whan Phebus was absent
His wyfe anon hath for her lemman sent
Her lemman/certes that is a knaue fyl & sherpe
Fortune it me/and that I pray befalle.

The wyse Plato sayth/as ye mow we rede
The worde must nedes accorde with the dede
If men shulde tel properly a thyng
The worde muste ensample to the werkyng
I am a boystouse man/right thus say I
There is but lytel difference truely
Betwyxt a wyfe/that is of hye degre
If of her body dishoneste she be
And a poore wenche/other than this
If it so be they werke bothe amys
But for the gentyl is in estate aboue
She shal be called his lady and his loue
And for that tother is a poore woman
She shal be called his wenche/or his lemman
And god it wote/myn owne dere brother
Men lay as lowe that one as that other
Right so betwyxt a tyrelesse tyraunt
And an outlawe/or a theef errannt
The same I say/there is no dyfference
To Alysaunder was tolde this sentence
That for the tyraunt is of greater myght
By force of meyne/to sle downe right
And brenne house & home/and make al playn
Lo therfore is he called a capitayne
And for the outlawe hath but smalle meyne
And may not do so great an harm/as he
Ne bringe a countrey to so great mischefe
Men callen him an outlawe or a theef.
But for I am a man not techynge
I wol not tel of termes neuer a dele
I wol go to my tale/as I began.
Whan Phebus wyfe had sent for her lemman
Anon they wrought al their lyste volage
This whyte crowe/that hynge ayr in the cage
Behelde their werke/and sayd neuer a worde
And whan hem was come Phebus home he foorde
This crowe songe/cuckow/cuckow/cuckow
What lorde (qd Phebus) what syngest thou?
Ne were thou not wont so merely to synge
That to my herte it was a recreacyon
To here thy voyce/alas/what songe is this?
By god (qd he) I synge not amys
Phebus (qd he) for al thy worthynesse
For al thy beaute/and thy gentylnesse
For al thy songe/and thy mynstralsye
For al thy wayting/blered is thyn eye
With oute of lytel reputacyon
Not worthe to the in comparyson

The

The mountenāce of a goat/ so mote I thine
For al thy bed/thy wyfe I saw hym swyue
Wh at wol ye more? ye crowe anon hym tolde
Of sothe tydīgs/and his wordes bolde
How that his wyfe had done her lechery
Him to great shame/and to great vylany
And tolde him eft/ he sawe it with his eyen
¶ This Phebus gan awaywarde for to pryen
Him thoughe his wofull herte braste a two
His bowe he bent/and set therin a flo
And in his pre he hath his wyfe slayne
This is the effecte/ there is no more to sayne
For sorowe wherof/he brake his mynstralsye
Bothe harpe and lute/ getern/ and sautrye
And eke he brake his arowes/ and his bowe
And after that/thus spake he to the crowe.
¶ Traytour (qd he) with tonge of scorpion
Thou hast me brought to my confusyon
Alas that I was wrought/ why nere I deed?
O dere wyfe/o gemme/o lustyheed
That were to me so sadde/ & eke so trewe
Now lyest thou deed/ with face pale of hewe
Ful gyltelesse/that durst I swere a thyng
O rakell honde/to do so foule a mys
O troubled wytte/ o pre retchelesse
That vnauysed smytest gyltelesse
O wantrust/ ful of false suspection
Where was thy wytte and thy discretion
Oh/ euery man beware of rēbylnesse
Ne trowe no thyng/without strong wytnesse
Smyte not to sone/ or thou wete why
And be auysed wel and sperely
Or pe do any execution
Vpon your pre) for suspection
Alas/ a thousande folke hath rebell pre
Fully fordone/ & brought hem in the myre
Alas for sorowe I wol my selfe sle
And to the crowe/ o false theef sayd he
I wol quite anon thy false tale
Thou songe whylom/lyke a nyghtyngale
Now shalt thou false theef/thy songe forgon
And eke thy whyte fethers currychon
Ne neuer in al thy lyfe shalte thou speke
Thus shul men on a traytour be awreke
Thou & thyn offspring euer shal be blake
Ne neuer swete noyse shal pe make
But euer crye agenst tempest and rayne
In token/that through the my wyfe is slayne
And to the crowe he fleeth/and that anon
And pulled of his whyte fethers currychon
And made hym blacke/& refte him al his songe
And eke his speche/& out at doze him stonge
Vnto the dyuel/whiche I him betake
And for this cause ben al crowes blake.
¶ Lordinges/by this ensāple I wol you pray
Beware/and take kepe what I say
Ne telleth neuer no man in your lyfe
How that any other man hath dight his wyfe
He wol you hate mortally certayne
Dan Salomon/as wyse clerkes sayne
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge well
But as I sayd/I am not techeul
But nathelesse/thus taught me my dame
My sonne thinke on ye crowe a goddes name
My sōne kepe wel thy tonge/& kepe thy frende
A wycked tonge is worse than a fende
My sonne/ from a fende men may hem blesse
My sonne/god of his endelesse goodnesse
Walled a tonge with teethe/and lyppes eke
For man shulde him auyse what he speke
My sonne/ ful ofte for to mykel speche
Hath many a man be spylte/as clerkes teche
But for lytel speche/ pouen auysedly
Is no man shente/to speke generally
My sonne/thy tonge shuldest thou refrayne
At al tymes/but whan thou doest thy payne
To speke of god/in honoure and prayere
The first vertue sonne/if thou wolt lere
Is to refrayne/and kepe wel thy tonge
Thus lerne childrey/whan they be ponge
My sonne/of mykel speking vnauysed
(There lasse speking had ynough suffysed)
Cometh mykel harme/ thus was me taught
In mocke speche/sonne wanteth naught
Wostē thou wherfore a rakell tonge serueth
Right as a swerde forcutteth and forkerueth
An arme or two/my dere sonne right so
A tonge cutteth frendshyp al a to
A iangler is to god abhominable
Rede Salomon/so wyse and honourable
Rede Dauid in his psalmes/ rede Senecke
My sonne spek not/ ne with thy heed becke
Dissymule as thou were deefe/ if ye thou here
The iangleour spekth of perilous matere.
The fleminge sayth/lerne if that thou lyke
That lytel iangling causeth mocke or vyke

My

My sone/ if thou no wicked worde hast sayde
The dare not drede for to be bewrayde
But he that hath missayd/ I dare wel sayne
He may by no way clepe his worde agayne
Thyng that is sayd/ is sayd/ & forthe it gothe
Though hym repent/ or him be neuer so lothe
Here is thral to hym/ to whom he hath sayde
A tale/ for whiche he is nowe yuel apayde
My sonne beware/ & be none auenour newe
Of tidynges/ whether they be false or trewe
Where so thou come/ amonge hye or lowe
Kepe wel thy tongue/ & thynke on the crowe.

¶ Here endeth the Manciples tale/ and here begynneth the Persons prologue.

BY that ỹ Manciple had his tale ended
The sonne fro ỹ southe syde is descended
So to we/ that it was not to my syght
Degrees of fyue and twenty on hyght
Hy at clocke it was/ so as I gesse
For eyleuen foote/ a fyteel more or lesse
My shadowe was at that tyme/ as there
Of suche fete as my length parted were
In fyue fete equally of proportion
Ther with the moones exaltation
I mene Libra/ alway gan ascende
As we were entryng at the thropes ende
For whiche our hoste/ as he was wont to gye
As in this case/ this iolly compayne
Sayd in this wyse/ lordynges euerychon
Nowe lacketh vs no tale more than one
Fulfylled is my sentence and my decree
Who wol nowe tel a tale lette
Almoste fulfylled is myn ordynaunce
I pray to god so yeue him right good chaunce
That telleth this tale to vs lustely
Sir preest (qd he) arte thou a vicary
Or arte thou a persone/ say sothe by thy fay
Be what thou be/ breke thou not our play
For euery man saue thou/ hath tolde his tale
Vnbokell/ & shewe vs what is in thy male
For trewely me thynketh by thy chere
Thou shuldest knyt vp wel a great matere
Hel vs a fable anon/ for cokkes bones
¶ This person him answerde al atones
Thou getest fable none tolde of me
For Poule/ that writeth to Tymothe
Repreueth hem that wayuen sothfastnesse
And tryfyng fables/ and eschewe wrechednesse
Why shulde I sowe draffe out of my fyste
Whan I may sowe whete/ if that me lyst
For whiche I saye/ if that ye lyst to here
Moralyte/ and of vertuous matere
And than/ if ye wol yeue me audience
I wolde ful fayne at Christes reuerence
Done you plesaunce leful/ as I can
But trusteth wel/ I am a sotherne man
I can not iape/ rum/ ram/ ruf/ by letter
And god wote/ rym holde I but lytel better
And therfore if ye lyst/ I wol not glose
I wol you tel a lytel tale in prose
To knyt vp al this feest/ and make an ende
And Jesu for his grace/ wyt me sende
To shewe you the way/ in this voyage
Of thilke perfyte glorious pylgrymage
That hyght Hierusalem celestyall
And if ye vouchsaue/ anon I shall
Begyn vpon my tale/ for whiche I pray
Tel your aduyse/ I can no better say
But natheles this meditation
I put it aye/ vnder the correction
Of clerkes/ for I am not textuell
I take but the sentence/ trusteth wel
Therfore I make protestation
That I wol stonde to correction.
¶ Upon this worde/ we haue assented sone
For as it semed/ it was for to done
To ende in some vertuous sentence
And for to yeue him space and audyence
And bade our hoste he shulde to him say
That al we/ to tell his tale him pray
Our hoste had the wordes for vs all
Sir preest (qd he) now fayre mote you befall
Say the what ye lyste/ & we shal gladly here
And with that worde he sayd in this manere
Telleth (qd he) your meditacion
But hasteth you/ the sonne wol adoun
Beth fructuous/ and that in lytel space
And to do wel/ god sende you his grace.

¶ Here endeth the Persons prologue/ and hereafter fo lowyth his tale.

¶ Jeremi. vi. State super vias/ et videte/ et interrogate de semitis antiquis/ que sit via bona/ et ambulate in ea: et invenietis refrigerium animabus vestris.

Our swete lorde god of heuen/ that no man wol perisshe/ but wol that we tourne all to the knowlege of hym/ and to the blysful lyfe that is perdurable/ amonesseth vs by the prophete Jeremye/ that sayth in this wyse. Stondeth vpon the wayes and seeth/ and aspieth of olde pathes: that is to say/ of olde sentences/ whiche is the good waye/ and walketh in that waye/ and ye shal fynde refresshynge for your soules. &c. Many ben the wayes espirituels that lede folke to our lorde Jesu Crist/ and to the reigne of glorie: Of whiche wayes there is a ful noble way/ & ful covenable/ whiche may not fayle to man ne to woman/ that through synne hath misgone fro the right way of Hierusalem celestyall: and this way is called penitence/ of whiche man shulde gladly herken and enquire with al his herte/ to wete what is penitence/ and whiche is called penitence/ and howe many maners ben of actions or werkynges of penitence/ and howe many speces there ben of penitence/ and whiche thynges apertayne and behoue to penitence/ and whiche thynges destourbe penitence.

Saynt Ambrose sayth/ that penitence is the playnynge of man for the gylte that he hath done/ and no more to do any thyng for whiche hym ought to playne. And some doctours sayethe/ Penitence is the waymentyng of man that sorweth for his synne/ and payneth hym selfe/ for he hath mysdon. Penitence with certayne circumstaunces/ is verry repentaunce of a man that holdeth hym selfe in sorowe/ & other payne for his gyltes: and for he shal be verry penytent/ he shal first bewayle synnes that he hath done/ and stedfastly purpose in his herte to haue shrifte of mouthe/ & to do satisfaccion/ and neuer to do thynge/ for whiche hym ought more bewayle or complayne/ and contynue in good workes: or elles his repentaunce may not auayle. For as sayth Moder sayethe. he is a leper and a lyer/ and no verry repentaunt that eft sone doth thyng/ for whiche hym ought repent. Weppynge and not for to synne is to synne/ may not auayle: But natheless/ men shal hope that at euery tyme that and sadly/ be it neuer so ofte/ that he may ariyse through penaunce/ if he haue grace: but certayne is it great doute/ for as saythe sayut Gregorye. Dauidles ariseth he out of syn/ that is ther-

pe

god with the charge of yuel vsage. And therfore repentaunce is/ that stynt for to synne/ and leue synne or synne leue the/ holy churche holdeth them spert of their saluacion. And he that synneth/ and verily repenteth him in his laste ende: holy churche yit hopeth his saluacion/ by ye grete mercy of our lorde Jesu Christ/ for his repentaunce: but take the spere wary.

¶ And now sith I haue declared you/ what thyng is Penitence/ now ye shal vnderstonde/ that there ben .iii. maner actions of penitence. The first is/ that a man be baptysed after that he hath synned. Saynt Austyn sayth/ but he be penytent for his olde synful lyfe/ he may not begyn the newe clene lyfe: For certes if he be baptysed without penitence of his olde gylt/ he receyueth ye marke of baptysm/ but not the grace ne the remyssyon of his synnes/ tyll he haue very repentaunce. An other defaute is this/ that men do deedly synne after that they haue receyued baptisme. The thirde defaute is this/ that men fal in venyall synnes after her baptisme/ fro day to day. Therof sayth saynt Augustyn/ that penitence of good and humble folke/ is the penitence of every daye.

The speces of penytence ben thre: That one of hem is solempne: an other is comune/ and the thirde is privy. That penaunce that is solempne is in two maners: As to be put out of holy churche in lent/ for slaughter of chyldren/ and suche maner thynge. An other is whan a man hath synned openly/ of whiche synne the fame is openly spoken in the countrey: and than holy churche by iugement/ distreyneth him for to do open penaunce.

Comen penaunce is/ that preestes enioyne men in certayne case: as for to go penaunce naked in pylgrymage/ or barefote. Privy penaunce is that/ that men do al daye for privy synnes/ of whiche we shrine vs prively/ and receyue privy penaunce. ¶ Now we shal thou vnderstonde/ what is behouefull and necessary to very perfyte penytence: and this stondeth on thre thynges. Contrycion of herte/ confession of mouthe/ & satisfaction. For whiche sayth saynt Johan Crisostom. Penitence destroyeth a man to accept benignely every payne/ that him is enioyned/ with contrycion of herte/ and shrifte of mouthe/ with satisfaction: and in werkyng of al maner humylite. And this is fruteful penitence ayenst thre thynges/ in whiche we wathe our lorde Jesu Christ: this is to say/ By delyte in thynkynge/ by redelessesse in spekyng/ & by wicked synful werkyng. And ayenst these wycked gyftes is penitence/ that may be lykened vnto a tree.

The rote of this tree is contrycion/ that lyth him in the herte of him that is very repentaunt/ right as the roote of a tree lyth him in the erthe. Of this rote of contrycion springeth a stalke/ that bereth braunches and leues of confession/ and fruite of satisfaction. For whiche Christ saith in his gospel. Doth digne fruite of penitence/ for by this fruite may men knowe the tre/ and not by the rote that is lyd in the herte of man/ ne by the braunches/ ne the leues of confession. And therfore our lorde Jesu Christ sayth thus: By the fruite of hem shal ye knowe hem. Of this rote also springeth a sede of grace/ the whiche sede is mother of al sobernesse/ and this sede is eyer's hote. The grace of this sede springeth of god/ through remembraunce on the daye of dome/ and on the paynes of hell. Of this mater sayth Salomon/ that in the drede of god/ man forsaketh his synne. The heate of this sede is the loue of god/ and ye desyryng of the ioye perdurable: This hete dooth with the herte of man to god/ and doth him hate his synne: For sothly there is no thyng that sauoureth so wel to a childe/ as the mylke of his nourryce/ ne nothyng is so him more abhominable than ye mylke/ whan it is medled with other meate. Right so the synful man that loueth his synne/ him semeth that it is to him most swete of any thyng/ but fro that tyme he loueth sadly our lorde Jesu Christ/ and desyreth the lyfe perdurable/ there is to him no thyng more abhominable: For sothly the lawe of god is the loue of god. For whiche Dauid the prophete sayth: I haue loued thy lawe/ & hated wickednesse: he that loueth god/ kepeth his lawe and his worde.

¶ This tree sawe the prophete Daniel in spirite/ on the visyon of Nabugodonosor/ whan he counsayled him to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of lyfe/ to hem that it receyue/ and he that

that holdeth him in very penitence is blessed/ after the sentence of Salomon. In this penytance or contrycion/ man shal vnderstonde foure thynges/ that is to say: What is contrycion/ and whiche ben the causes that moue a man to contrycion/ and how he shulde be contrycte/ and what contrycion auayleth to the soule. Than is it thus/ that contrycion is the very sorowe/ that a man receyueth in his hert for his synnes/ with sadde purpose to shryue him/ and to do penaunce/ and neuer more to do synne: And this sorow shal be in this maner/ as sayth sayntē Bernarde: It shal be heuy and greuouse/ and ful sharpe and poynaunt in herte. ¶ First/ for a man hath agilted his lorde and his creatoure/ and more sharpe and poynaunt/ for he hath wrathed and agilted hym that bought him/ that with his precyouse bloode hath deliuered vs fro the bondes of synne/ and fro the cruelte of the dyuel/ & fro the paynes of hell.

The causes that ought moue a man to contrycion ben syxe. First a man shal remembre hym of his synnes/ but loke that that remembraunce ne be to him no delyte/ by no waye/ but great shame and sorowe for his synnes. For Iob saith/ synful men done workes worthy of confessyon. And therfore sayth Ezechiel: I wol remembre me al the yeres of my lyfe/ in the bytternesse of my herte. And god sayth in the Apocalipse: Remembre ye from whence that ye ben fall/ for before that tyme that ye synned/ ye were chyldren of god/ and synnes of the reigne of god: But for your synne ye ben wexen thrall and foule/ & membres of the fende: hate of angels/ slaunder of holy churche/ and foode of the false serpent/ perpetual matere of the fyre of hell: And yet more foule and abhominable/ for ye trespace so ofte tymes/ as doth an houndē ꝑ returneth ayen to rete his owyn spewyng: & yet be ye foulet/ for your long cōtynuyng in synne/ & your synful vsage/ for whiche ye be roted in your synne/ as a berst in his donge. Suche maner of thoughtes make a man to haue shame of his synne/ and no delyte. As god sayth/ by the prophete Ezechiel: ye shal remembre you of your wayes/ & they shul displese you sothly. Synnes ben the wayes that lede folke to hell.

The seconde cause that ought make a man to haue disdayne of synne is this/ that as sayth the sayntē Peter: Who so doth synne is thrall of synne/ and synne putteth a man in great thraldome. And therfore sayth the prophete Ezechiel: I went sorouful/ in disdayne of my selfe. Certes wel ought a man haue disdayne of synne/ and withdrawe him fro that thraldom and vilonye. And to what sayth Seneke in this mater/ he sayth thus: Thoughe I wyste/ that neyther god ne man shulde neuer knowe it/ yet wolde I haue disdayne for to do synne. And the same Seneke also sayth: I am borne to greatter thynges/ than to be thral to my body/ or for to make of my body a thral. Lo a fouler thral maye no man ne woman make of his body/ than for to yeue his body to synne/ al were it the foulest churle/ or the foulest woman that lyueth/ and leste of value/ yet is he than more foule/ and more in seruytude. Euer fro the hyghe degre that man falleth/ the more is he thrall/ and more to god and to the worlde vyle and abhominable. O good god/ wel ought man haue great disdayne of synne/ syth ꝑ through synne/ there he was free he is made bonde. And therfore sayth sayntē Austyn: If thou hast disdayne of thy seruaunt/ if he offende or synne/ haue thou than disdayne that thou thy selfe shuldest do synne. Take rewarde of thyn owne value/ that thou ne be to foule to thy selfe. Alas wel ought they than haue disdayne to be seruauntes and thralles to synne/ and sore to be ashamed of them selfe/ that god of his endeles goodnesse hath sette in hyghe astate/ or yeue hem wytte/ strenght of body/ heale/ beutie/ or prosperyte/ and bought hem fro the dethe with his herte blode/ that they so vnkyndly/ agaynst his gentylnesse/ quite him so vilaynously/ to slaughter of her owne soules. O good god/ ye women ꝑ ben of great beautie/ remembreth you on the prouerbe of Salomon. He sayth he lyketh a fayre woman/ that is a foole of her body/ to a ryngt of golde ꝑ were wonne on the grotyne of a sowe.

For

for right as a fowle wooteth by euery ordure/ so wooteth she her heerte by stynkyng ordure of synne.

The thirde cause ꝑ ought meue a man to contricion/ is drede of the daye of dome/ & of the horrible paynes of hell. For as sayntt Jerom sayth: At euery tyme that me remembreth of the daye of dome/ I quake: For whan I ete and drinke/ or what so that I do/ euer semeth me that ꝑ trompe sowneth in myn eres: Ryseth ye up that ben dede/ and cometh to the iugement. O good god/ moche ought a man to drede such a iugemẽt/ there as we shal be al/ as saint Paule sayth/ before the sete of our lorde Jesu Crist/ where as he shal make a generall congregation/ where as no man may be absent/ for certes there auayleth non essoyne ne excusation/ and not only that our defautes shal be iuged/ but also that al our werkes shal openly be knowen. And as sayth saint Bernarde/ there ne shal no pleadyng auayle/ ne no sleyght: We shal yeue reckenyng of euery idell worde. There shal we haue a iuge that may not be disceyued ne corrupte/ and why? For certes/ al our thoughtes ben discouered/ as to hym/ ne for prayere ne for meede/ he shal not be corrupte. And therfore sayth Salomon: The wrathe of god ne wol not spare no wight/ for prayere ne for yefte. And therfore at the daye of dome/ there is no hope to escape. Wherfore/ as sayth sayntt Anselm: ful great angwisshe shal ꝑ synful folke haue at that tyme: There shal the sorwe and woofle iuge sytte aboue/ and vnder hym the horrible pytte of hell open/ to distroy hym that wolde ben owre the synnes/ whanne synnes openly ben shewed before god and before euery creature: And on the left syde/ moo dyuels than any herte may thynke/ for to hale & drawe the synful soules to the payne of hell/ and within the hertes of folke shal be the byting remorse/ and without forthe shal be the worlde al brennyng: whyther shal than the wretched synful man flye to hyde hym? Certes he may not hyde hym/ he moste come forth and shewe hym. For certes/ as sayth saint Jerom/ the erth shal welle hym out of it & the see also/ & the ayre that shal be ful of thonder clappes & lightnynges.

Now sothly/ who so wel remembreth hym of these thynges: I gesse/ that his synne shal not turne hym in delyte/ but to great sorowe/ for drede of the payne of hell. And therfore sayth Job to god: suffre forde/ that I may a whyle bewayle & wepe/ er I go without returnynge to the derke londe/ couered with the derknesse of dethe/ to the londe of misese & of derknesse/ where as is ꝑ shadowe of deth/ where as there is none ordre ne ordynaunce/ but ferefull drede that euer shal laste. Lo/ here may ye se/ that Jobe prayed respyte a whyle/ to bewepe and wayle his trespace: for sothly one day of respite is better than al ꝑ tresour of this worlde. And for as moche as a man may acquite hym selfe before god by penitence in this worlde/ and not by tresour/ therfore shulde he pray to god to yeue hym respit a while/ to bewepe and wayle his trespace: For certes/ al the sorowe that a man myght make fro the begynnyng of the worlde/ nys but a lyttel thyng/ at regarde of the sorowe of hell. The cause why that Jobe calleth hell the londe of derknesse/ vnderstondeth that he calleth it londe or erth/ for it is stable and neuer shal fayle/ & derke: for he that is in hell hath defaute of lyght material/ for certes the derke light that shal come out of the fyre that euer shal brenne/ shal turne hym al to payne that is in hell/ for it sheweth hym to the horrible dyuels that hym tormenteth/ couered with the derkenesse of dethe/ that is to say/ that he that is in hell/ shal haue defaute of the syght of god: for certes the syght of god is the lyfe perdurable. The derknesse of dethe/ ben ꝑ synnes that the wretched man hath done/ whiche that disturbe hym to se the face of god/ right as the derke cloude betwyxt vs & the sonne. Londe of misese/ bicause that there ben thre maner of defautes/ ayenst thre thynges that folke of this worlde haue in this present lyfe/ that is to say: honours/ delyces/ and richesse. Ayenst honour haue they in hell shame and confusyon: For wel ye wote/ that men call honour the reuerence that man doth to man/ but in hell is non honour ne reuerence/ For certes/ no more reuerence shal be do there to a king/ than to a knaue. For whiche god sayth by the prophete Jeremy: Those folke that me

dispyse/ shal be in dispyte. Honoure is also called great lordship: there shal no wight serue other/ but of harme & turment. Honoure is also called great dignyte & hyghnesse/ but in hell shal they be al fortroden of dyuels. As god sayth: the horryble dyuels shal go and come vpon the heedes of dampned folke: and this is/ for as moch as the higher ỳ they were in this present lyfe/ the more shal they be abated & defoyled in hell. Ayenst the richesse of this worlde shal they haue mysese of powerte/ that shal be in foure thinges: In defaute of tresoure. Of whiche Dauid sayth: The riche folke that enbiace & knyt al her herte to tresour of this worlde/ shal slepe in the slepyng of dethe/ and nothyng ne shul they fynde in her hondes of al her tresour. And more ouer the mysese of hell shal be in defaute of meete and dunke. For god sayth thus by Moyses: They shal be wasted with honger/ & the byrdes of hell shal deuour hem/ with bytter deth/ and the gall of the dragon shal be her dunke/ and the venym of the dragon her morsels. Also her mysease shal be in defaute of clothig/ for they shal be naked in body/ as of clothung/ saue the fyre in whiche they brenne/ and other fylthes: & naked shal they be of soule/ of al maner vertues/ which ỳ is the clothing of the soule. Where ben than the gay robes/ the soft shetes/ & the smal shertes? Lo/ what saith god of hem by the prophete Isaye/ that vnder hem shal be strewed moughtes/ & her couertures shal be of wormes of hell? Also her mysease shal be in defaute of frēdes/ for he is not poore that hath good frendes/ but there is no frēde/ for neyther god ne no creature shal be frende to hem/ & eche of hem shal hate other wt deedly hate: The sonnes & the doughters shal rebell ayenst father & mother/ & kynred ayenst kynred/ chyde & dispyse eche other/ bothe day and night/ as god sayth by the prophete Micheas: And the louynge children ỳ Babylon loued so flesshly eche other/ wold eche of hem ete other if they myght. For lo we shulde they loue together in the paynes of hell/ whan they hated eche other in ỳ prosperite of this lyfe: for trust wel/ her flesshly loue was deedly hate. As sayth the prophete Dauid: Who so ỳ louyth wickednesse/ he hateth his soule: & who so hateth his owne soule/ certes he may loue none other wight in no maner: And therfore in hel is no solace ne no frendshyp/ but euer ỳ more pyrredes that ben in hel/ the more cursynges/ the more chydynges/ and the more deedly hate there is amonge hem. Also they shal haue defaute of al maner delyces/ for certes delyces ben after the appetytes of ỳ fyue wyttes: as syght/ herynge/ smellyng/ sauourynge/ and touchynge. But in hell her syght shal be ful of derknesse & of smoke/ and therfore ful of teares/ and her herynge ful of wayling & grynsynge of tethe: As sayth Jesu Crist. Her nose thirles shal be ful of stynkyng. And/ as sayth Isaye the prophete: Her sauourynge shal be ful of bytter gall/ and as touchyng of al her bodyes/ prouerd with fyre that neuer shal quenche/ & with wormes that neuer shal dye. As god sayth by the mouthe of Isaye: and for as moch as they shal not wene that they may dye for payne/ and by dethe flye fro payn/ that may they vnderstonde in the wordes of Job/ that sayth: There is the shadowe of dethe. Certes a shadowe hath ỳ lyknesse of the thig of whiche it is shadowed/ but shadowe is not the same thyng of which it is shadowed: right so fareth the payne of hell/ it is lyke dethe/ for the horryble anguissh. And why? For it payneth hem euer as though they shuld dye anon/ but certes they shal not dye. For as saith saint Greg. to wicched caytifes shal be deth wt out deth/ & ende wt out ende/ & defaut wt out faylyng/ for her deth shal alwey lyue/ & her end shal euermore begyn/ & her defaute shal not fayle.

And therfore sayth saint Johan the Euangelyst/ they shal folowe dethe & they shal not fynde him/ and they shal desyre to dye/ & dethe shal flye fro hem. And also Job sayth/ that in hel is no ordre of rule. And al be it so/ that god hath create al thyng in right order/ & nothyng without order/ but al thynges ben ordred & nombred/ yet nathelesse they that ben dampned ben nothyng in order/ ne holde non order/ for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruite. For/ as the prophete Dauid sayth: God shal distroye the fruite of the erthe/ as for hem/ the water/ ne shal yeue hem no moysture/ ne the

yue no refresshyng/ ne fyre no hyght. For as
sayth sayne Basilie: The brennyng of the fyre
of this worlde shal god yeue in hell to hem
that ben dampned/ but the light & the clerenesse
shal be yeue in heuen to his chyldren: right as
good man yeue flesshe to her children/ & bones
to her hounden. And for they shal haue none
hope to escape/ sayth sayne Job at laste/ that
there shal ernure and grisly derke dwell with-
out ende. Horrour is alwaye derke that is to
sayne/ and this derke shal alway dwell in the
hertes of hem that ben dampned. And therfore
haue they lost al her hope for seuen causes.
First for god that is her iuge shal be without
mercy to hem/ and they may not plese him ne
none of his saynts/ ne they may not yeue no
thyng for her raunsom/ ne they shal haue no
power to speke to him/ ne they may not flit fro
payne/ ne they haue no goodnesse in hem that
they mayen shewe to delyuer hem fro payne.
And therfore sayth Salomon: The wicked
man dyeth/ and whan he is derd/ he shal haue
no hope to escape fro payne. Who so than
wolde wel vnderstond the paynes/ & bethinke
him wel that he hath deserued those paynes
for his synnes/ certes he shulde haue more ta-
sted to syghe and wepe/ than for to synge and
playe. For as sayth Salomon/ who so that
had the science to knowe the payns that ben
ordayned for synne/ he wolde make sore we.
That science/ as sayth sayne Austyn/ maketh
a man to wepement in his herte.

The fourthe poynt that ought make a
man haue contrycion/ is the sorouful
remembraunce of the good that he hath lefte
to do here in erthe/ and also the good that he
hath lost. Bothly the good werkes yf he hath
lefte/ eyther they be the good werkes that he
wrought er he fyll in derkly synne/ or elles the
good werkes that he wrought whyle he lay in
synne. Bothly the good werkes that he dyd
before that he fell in synne ben al mortyfied/
yponed/ and ded by ofte synnyng. The wer-
kes that he dyd whyle he lay in synne be derd/
vn to the lyfe perdurable in heuen: than the
good werkes yf hem ben mixted by ofte synnig/
which he dyd beyng in charite/ may not quick
eyen without hope purgatorie. And of it sayth
god by ỹ mouthe of Ezechiel: If the rightful
man returne ayen fro his rightwysnesse & do
wickednesse/ shal he lyue? nay: for al ỹ good
werkes that he hath do/ ne shal neuer be in re-
membraunce/ for he shal dye in his synne. And
vpon ỹ chapitre sayth sayne Gregorie thus/
that we shal vnderstonde this principally: If
that we doy deedly syn/ it is for nought than
to reherse or draw in to memorie ỹ good wer
kes that we haue wrought before: for certes
in the werkig of deedly synne/ ther is no trust
to no good werke that we haue done before:
that is to say/ as for to haue therby the lyfe
perdurable in heuen. But natheless the good
werkes quicken and come agayne/ and helpe
and auayle to haue ỹ lyfe perdurable in heuen
whā we haue cōtrycion: But sothly the good
werkes that men doy whyle they be in deedly
synne/ for as moch as they were don in deedly
syn/ they may neuer quicke: for certes/ thyng
that neuer had lyfe/ maye neuer quicke: And
natheless al be it that they auayle not to haue
the lyfe perdurable/ yet auaile they to abredge
of the payne of hel/ or elles to get temporal rp-
chesses/ or elles ỹ god wol the rather enlumyne
or light the herte of the synful man to haue re
pentaūce/ & eke they auayle for to vse a man
to do good werkes/ that ỹ fende haue the lesse
power of his soule. And thus ỹ certeyn forde
Jesu Crist ne wol ỹ no good werke be lost/
for in somwhat it shal auayle. But for as
moche as the good werkes that me doy whyle
they ben in good lyfe/ ben al amortised by syn
folowyng: & also sith that al the good werkes
that me doy whyle they be in deedly synne ben
vtterly derd/ as for to haue ỹ lyfe perdurable/
Wel maye that man that no good werke ne
dothe/ synge that newe frenshe songe (Jay tout
perdu mon temps/ et mon labure) For certes
synne byreueth a man bothe goodnesse of na-
ture/ & also the goodnesse of grace. For sothly
the grace of the holy goost fareth like fyre that
maye not be yeuen/ for fyre fayleth anon as it
forleteth his werkyng: and right so grace fay-
leth anon as it forleteth his werkyng. Than
seyeth the synful man the goodnesse of glory/
that only is behight to good men that labour
and werke. Wel may he be sory than ỹ euer

al his lyfe to god/ as longe as he hath lyued/ and also as longe as he shal lyue/ ꝑ no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to god/ to whom he oweth al his lyfe: for truste wel he shal yeue accõptes/ as sayth saynt Bernarde of al ꝑ goodes that haue ben yeue him in this present lyfe/ and how he hath hem dispended/ in so moch that there shal not perysshe an herre of his heed/ ne a moment of an houre/ ne shal not perysshe of his tyme/ that he ne shal yeue of it a rekenyng.

The fyfth thynge that ought to moue a man to contricion/ is remembraunce of the passion that our lorde Jesu Christ suffred for our synnes. For as sayth saynt Bernarde/ whyle that I lyue I shal haue remembraunce of the trauayles that our lorde Jesu Christ suffred in prechynge/ his werynesse in trauayling/ his temptacions whan he fasted/ his longe waxynges whan he prayed/ his teres whan that he wepte for pyte of good people/ the wo/ the shame/ and the fylth that men sayd to him: of the foule spyttyng that men spyt in his face/ of ꝑ buffettes that men yaue him: of the foule mowes and of the reproues that men said to him: of the nayles/ with whiche he was nayled to the crosse/ and of al the remenaunt of his passyon that he suffred for my synnes/ & no thyng for his gylte. And ye shal vnderstonde/ that in mans synne is euery maner ordre or ordynaunce turned vp so downe. For it is sothe/ that god/ reason/ sensualyte/ and the body of man/ ben ordayned that ethe of these foure thynges shulde haue lordshyp ouer that other: as thus. God shuld haue lordshyp ouer reson/ and reson ouer sensualyte/ and sensualyte ouer the body of man. But sothly whan man synneth/ al this ordre or ordynaūce is turned vp so down. And therfore thā/ for as moch as reson of man ne wol not be subiect ne obeyssaunt to god/ that is his lorde by right/ therfore leseth it ꝑ lordshyp that it shulde haue ouer sensualyte/ and also ouer the body of man. And why: for sensualyte rebelleth than ayenst reson: and by that way leseth reson the lordshyp ouer sensualyte & ouer the body: For right as reson is rebell to god/ right so is bothe sensualyte rebel to reson & to the body also: And certes this disordynaūce & this rebellion our lorde Jesu Christ bought vpon his precious body ful dere: & herkeneth in what wyse. For as moche than as reson is rebel to god/ therfore is man worthy to haue sorow & to be deed. Thus suffred our lord Jesu Christ for man/ after that he had be betrayed of his disciple/ & distrayned & bounde/ so that his blode braste out at euery nayle of his hondes/ as sayth saynt Austyn. And ferthermore/ for as moche as reson of men wol not daūte sensualyte/ whan it may/ therfore is man worthy to haue shame: & this suffred our lord Jesu Christ for man/ whan they spyt in his visage. And ferthermore/ for as moch thā as the captyse body of man is rebel bothe to reson & to sensualyte/ therfore it is worthy dethe/ & thus suffred our lorde Jesu Christ vpon the crosse/ where as there was no parte of his body free without great payne & bytter passyon: and al this suffred our lorde Jesu Christ that neuer forfayted. And therfore resonably may be said of Jesu in this maner: To moche am I payned for thinges that I neuer deserued/ and to moch defouled for shame that man is worthy to haue. And therfore may ꝑ synful man wel say/ as sayth saynt Bernarde. Acursed be the bytternesse of my synne/ for whiche ther must be suffred so moche bytternes. For certes after the diuers discordāce of our wicked̄esse/ was the passyon of Jesu christ ordayned in diuers thynges: as thus. Certes synful mans soule is betrayed of the deuel by couetyse of temporel prosperite/ & scorned by disceyte whan that he cheseth flesshly delyces/ and yet it is tormented by impacience of aduersite/ & despyt by resistence & subiection of synne/ & at the laste it is slayne fynally. For thus disordinaūce of synful man was Jesu Christ furst betrayed/ & after ꝑ wan he bounde/ that came for to vnbynde vs of synne & of payne. Than was he despysed/ ꝑ only shuld haue be honoured in al thinges. Than was his visage ꝑ ought be desyred to be fayr of al manhode/ in whiche visage angels desyre to loke/ vnsayntly be spet. Than was he scourged that nothing had trespaced/ and fynally than was he crucifyed & slayn. Than was accomplissed the wordes of Ysay:

he was wounded for our misdedes / & defoyled for our felonyes. Now we syth that Jesu Christ tooke on him the payn of al our mysdoynges / muche ought synfull man wepe and bewayle / that for his synnes goddes sone of heuen shuld al this payne endure.

The fyrst thyng ꝑ stirreth vnto a man to contrition / is the hope of thre thynges / that is to say: forgeuenesse of synne / and the yefte of grace for to do well / & the ghoste of heuen / with whiche god shal rewarde man for his good dedes: And for as muche as Jesu Cryst geueth vs these yeftes of his largenesse and of his soueraygn bonitie / therfore is he called (Jesus Nazarenus rex Judeorꝫ) Jesus is to say / saueour or saluacion / on whom men shal hope to haue forgeuenesse of synnes / whiche that is properly saluacion of synnes. And therfore said the angel to Joseph / thou shalte call his name Jesus / that shal saue his people of her synnes. And herof sayth sayut Peter: There is none other name vnder heuen that is yeue to any man / by whiche a man may be saued / but only Jesus. Nazarenus is as muche for to saye / as flourisshyng / in whiche a man shal hope that he that geueth him remissyon of synnes / shal yeue him also grace wel for to do. I was at the doue of thyn hert sayth Jesus / & called for to entre: he that openeth to me shal haue forgeuenesse of synne. I wil entre in to him by my grace / & suppe with him by the good werkes ꝑ he shal do / whiche were hys very the fode of the soule: & he shal suppe with me / by ꝑ great ioy that I shal yeue him. Thus shal man hope for his merites of pesaunce / that god shal yeue him his regne / as he behyght him in the gospel. Now shal a man vnderstonde in whiche maner shal be his contrycion: I say that it shal be vniuersal and total / this is to say: a man shal be very repentaunt for al his synnes that he hath done in thought / for it is right perilous. For there ben two maners of consentynges / that one of hem is called consentyng of effection / when a man is moued to do synne / and thynketh him longe for to thynke on that synne / and his reson approueth it wel that it is synne ayenst the lawe of god / and yet his reason refraineth not his fowle delyte or talent / thoughe he se wel openly that it is ayenst the reuerence of god / al thoughe his reson ne consent not to do that synne in dede / yet saye some doctours that suche delyte that dwelleth longe is ful perylous / al be it neuer so lytel. And also a man shulde sorowe / namely for al that euer he hath desyred ayenst the lawe of god / with perfyte consentyng of his reson / for therof is no doute that it is deedly synne in cõsentyng: for certes there is no deedly synne but that it is first in mans thought / and after that in his delyte / and so forthe in to consentyng and in to dede. Wherfore I say ꝑ many men ne repent hem neuer of suche thoughtes and delytes / ne neuer shunt hem of it / but only of the dede of great synnes outwarde: wherfore I say that suche wicked delytes ben suffyll begyleres of hem that shal be dampned. Ware ouer / man ought to sorowe for his wicked workes as wel as for his wicked dedes: for certes the repentaunce of a synguler synne / and not repentaunt of al his other synnes / or ells repent him of al his other synnes / and not of a synguler synne / may not auayle: for certes god almighty is al good / and therfore ether he forgeueth al / or ells right nought. And therfore sayethe sayut Augustyn: I wote certainly that god is enemy to euery synner: and howe than he that obserueth one synne / shal he haue forgeuenesse of those other synnes? Nay. And more ouer contrycion shulde be wonder sorouful and anguisshous / & therfore geueth him god plaunyshus mercy: And therfore whan my soule was anguisshed and sorouful within me / than had I remembraunce of god / that my prayer myght come to him. Furthermore / contrycion must be continuell / and that man haue stedfast purpose to shryue him and to amende him of his lyfe. For soothly withoute contrycion lasteth / may neuer hope to haue forgeuenesse. And of this cometh hate of synne / that destroyeth bothe synne in him self / and also in other folke as he may. For therfore sayethe Dauid: Ye that loue god hate wickednesse: For to loue god is for to loue that he loueth / and hate that he hateth. Also he sayth that many shal [illegible]

[illegible] shryue

stonde is this / Wherfore anayleth cõtrycion. I say ꝑ contrycion somtyme delyuereth man fro synne: Of which Dauid sayth/ I sayd said Dauid/ I purposed fermely to shryue me/ and thou lorde releyssedest my synne. And right so as contrycion anayleth not without sad purpose of shryfte if man haue oportunyte/ right so lytel worthe is shryfte or satysfaction without contrycion. And more ouer contrycion distroyeth the prison of hell/ & maketh weake and feeble al the stregthes of the dyuels/ and restoreth the pestes of the holy goost and of al good vertues/ and it clenseth ꝑ soule of synne and delyuereth it fro the payne of hell/ & fro the company of the dyuel/ and fro the seruage of synne/ and restoreth it to al goodes spyrytuels/ and to the company and communyon of holy churche. Ferthermore it maketh hym that whylom was sonne of ire/ to be the sonne of grace: And al these thinges ben proued by holy writte. And therfore he that wolde set his entent to these thinges he were ful wyse/ for truly he ne shulde haue thay in al his lyfe corage to synne/ but yeue his herte and body to serue Ihesu/ and therof do hym homage. For truly our lorde hath spared vs so mekely in our sofyes/ that if he ne had pyte of mannes soule/ a sory songe might we al synge.

¶ Explicit prima pars penitentie: et incipit pars secunda.

The seconde parte of penytence is confessyon/ that is signe of contrycion. Nowe shul ye vnderstonde what is cõfessyon/ and if it ought nedes be done or no/ & whiche thynges be conuenable to very cõfessyon. First shalt thou vnderstonde/ ꝑ confessyon is very shewyng of synnes to the preest: this is to say very/ for he must confesse hym of al the condycions that belonge to his synne/ as forforth as he can: al must be sayd/ and nothyng excused ne hyd/ and not auaunt the of thy good werkes. Also it is necessarye to vnderstonde whence that synnes spryng/ & howe they entre/ and whiche they ben. Of the spryngyng of synnes sayth the sayntt Poule in this wyse: that right as by one man synne entred fyrste in to this worlde/ and through synne deth/ right so the dethe entreth in to al men that synne/ and this man was Adam/ by whom synne entred in to this worlde/ whan he brake the cõmaundement of god. And therfore he that first was so mighty ꝑ he ne shulde haue dyed/ becam so that he muste nedes dye whether he wolde or no/ & al his progenye in this worlde ꝑ in the said man synned. Lo/ that in the state of innocencie/ whan Adam & Eue were naked in paradyse/ & shamed not therof/ howe the serpent wyseste of al other beestes that god made/ sayd to the woman: Why cõmanded god you that ye shuld not ete of euery tre i paradyse? The woman answerd: Of the fruite said she of the trees of paradyse we fede vs/ but of the fruite of the myddel tree of paradyse god forbode vs to ete and touche leste we shulde dye. The serpent said to the woman: Nay nay/ ye shal not dye of dethe/ for sothe god woot that what day that ye ete therof/ your eyen shal apen/ & ye shal be as goddes knowyng good & harme. The woman than sawe that the tre was good to fedynge/ & fayre to the eyen/ & delectable to syght/ she tooke of the fruite of the tre and ete/ & gaue to her husbonde/ and he ete/ and anon the eyen of hem bothe opened: And whan that they knewe that they were naked they sowed of sygge leues i maner of breches to hyde her membres. Here maye ye se that deedly synne hath first suggestion of the sende as sheweth here by ꝑ adder/ & afterwarde the delyte of the flesshe/ as sheweth by Eue/ & after that consentyng of reson/ as sheweth here by Adam. For trust wel though so it were that the sende tempted Eue/ that is to say ꝑ flesshe/ and the flesshe had delyte in the bruite of the fruite defended/ yet certes tyl that reson/ that is to say Adam/ consented to the eatyng of the fruite/ yet stode he in the state of innocence. Of the said Adam tooke we the sayd ougynal synne/ for of hym flesshly descended be we al/ and engendred of vyle and corrupte matere: And whan the soule is put in our bodyes/ right anon is contracte ougynal synne/ and that that was erst but only payne of concupiscẽce is al-

is afterwarde bothe payne and synne/ & therfore we ben al boure sonnes of wrathe and of dampnation perdurable/ if it were baptym ȳ we receyue/ whiche benymmeth vs the coulpe but forsothe the pyne dwelleth with vs as to temptation/ which pyne highte Concupiscence. This cōcupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordayned in man/ it maketh him to wryte by coueitise of fleisshe fleisshely synne by sight of his eyen/ as to erthly thynges/ & also coueitise of highnesse by pride of herte.

Now as to speke of the firste coueitise that is concupiscence/ after the lawe of our membres that were lawfully made/ and by rightful iugement of god/ I saye/ for as muche as man is not obeyssant to god that is his lorde/ therfore is the fleisshe to him disobeyssant through concupiscence/ whiche is called norrisshynge of synne/ and occasion of synne. Therfore al the while that a man hath within him ȳ pyne of concupiscence/ it is impossyble but he be tempted somtyme and moued in his fleisshe to syn. And this thyng maye not faile as long as he liueth. It maye wel weye febled by vertue of baptyme and by the grace of god through penaunce/ but fully we shal it neuer quenche that we ne shal sometyme be moued in vs self/ but if we were al enfeebled by sykenesse or by maner of sowrey or colde drinkes. For so/ what saith saynt Poule: the fleisshe coueiteth ayenst the spirite/ and the spirite ayenst the fleisshe: they ben so contrary & so stryuen/ that a man maye not alway do as he wolde. The same saynt Poule/ after his great penaunce/ in water and in londe: in water by nyght & by day/ in great peryl and in great pyne. In londe in hunger and thurst/ colde and clothlesse/ & ones stoned almost to dethe. Yet (sayd he) alas/ I caytife man/ who shal delyuer me fro the prisone of my caytise body? And saynt Jerom/ whan he longe tyme had dwelled in deserte/ where as he hadde no company but of wylde beestes/ where as he had no meate but herbes and water to drinke/ ne no bedde but the naked erthe/ wherfore his fleisshe was blacke as an Ethiopien for hete/ and nye disfroyed for colde. Yet (sayd he) that the brennynge of lechery boyled in al his body. Wherfore I wot wel that they be diseyued that saye/ they be nat tempted in her bodies. Witnesse salt James that saith/ that euery wight is tempted in his owne cōsceruce/ that is to saye: ȳ erthe of hath matere & occasion to be tepted of the nourshyng of syn that is in his body. And therfore saith saint John thewangelyst: if we say that we ben without syn we diseyue our self/ and truthe is not in vs. Now shal ye vnderstonde how syn weyeth & encreseth in man. The first thyng is the same nourisshyng of syn/ of which I spake before/ the fleisshly cōcupiscence/ and after that cometh suggestion of ȳ deuyl/ that is to say the deuyls wisdom/ with which he bloweth in man the fire of cōcupiscence/ and after that a man bethinketh him whether he wol do assent/ that thyng to whiche he is tempted. And than if a man withstonde & weyue ȳ first entryng of his fleisshe & of the fende than is no syn/ & if so be he do not: than sleeth he anon a flame of delyte/ & than is it good to be ware and kepe him wel/ or els he wol ful sone to consentyng of syn/ & than wol he do it. if he may haue tyme & place. And of this manere fende assaileth vs by the deuyl in this manere: the fende saith/ I wol chace & parsue man by wicked suggestion/ & I wol take him by meuing and stirryng of syn/ and I wol departe my pursse of my power by delyberation/ & my lust shalbe accōplyssshed in delyte/ I wol drawe my swerde to cōsentyng. For certes/ right as a swerde departeth a thynge in two perts/ right so cōsentyng departeth god fro man/ & than wol I slee him with my honde in dede of syn: thus saith the fende. For certes/ than is a man al dede in soule/ & thus is syn accōplyssshed with temptation/ by delyte & consentyng: & than is the syn actuel. Forsoth syn is in two maners/ either it is venyal or deedly synne. Soothly whan man loueth aught creature more than Jesu christ our creatour/ than it is deedly synne/ & venyal synne it is/ if man loue Jesu Christ lesse than him ought. Forsoth the dede of this venyal synne is ful perilous/ for it mynysheth the loue that man shulde haue to god more & more. And therfore if a man charge him self with many suche venyal synnes: certes but if so be that he sometyme discharge him of hem by shrifte/

shuste. They maye ful lightly mynysshe in hym al the loue that he hath to Jesu Christ/ & in this wise slippeth venial syn into deedly syn. For certes/ the more that a man chargeth his soule with venyal synnes/ the more he is enclyned to fall in to deedly synne. And therfore lette vs nat be negligent to charge vs of venyal synnes. For the prouerbe saith/ þ many smal make a great. Herkeneth this ensample. A great wawe of the see cometh sometyme with so great a violence/ that it ouerwelueth the shippe. And the same harme dothe sometyme the smal dropes of water that entreth through a lytel creuece/ in to þ tymbre and in to the botome of the shippe/ if men be so negligent that they discharge hem not by tymes. And therfore al though there be a difference betwyxt these two causes of drowninge/ algates the shippe is drowned. Right so farth it sometyme of deedly synne and of anoyous venyal synnes/ whan they multiplie in man so greatly/ that those worldly thynges that he loueth/ through whiche he synneth venyally/ is as great in his herte as the loue of god/ or more: and therfore the loue of euery thyng that is not set in god/ ne done principally for goddes sake/ al though that a man loue it lesse than god/ yet is it venyall synne/ and deedly synne whan the loue of ony thyng weyeth in þ hert of man/ as moche as the loue of god or more. Deedly synne as sayth saynt Austyn/ is whan a man turneth his herte fro god/ whiche þ is very souerayne bountie that may not chaunge/ & yeueth his herte to thyng that may chaunge & flytte: and certes that is euery thig saue god of heuen. For soth is that if a man yeue his loue/ whiche that he oweth to god with all his hert/ vnto a creature/ certes as moche of loue as he yeueth to that same creature/ so moche he byreueth fro god/ & therfore dothe he synne: For he that is dettour to god ne yeldeth not to god al his dette/ that is to say/ al the loue of his hert. Nowe sythe man vnderstondeth generally which is venyal syn/ than it is conuenable to tel specially of synne/ whiche that many a man peraduenture demeth hem no synnes/ & shuneth him not of the same thynges/ & yet natheless they be synnes soothly as these clerkes write/ this is to sayn: At euery tyme þ man eteth or drinketh more than sufficeth to þ sustenaūce of his body/ ne certayne he doth synne: and also whan he speketh more than it nedeth/ it is synne. Also whan he herkeneth not benignely the complaynt of þ poure. Also whan he is in heele of body and wol not faste whan other folke faste/ without cause resonable: also whan he slepeth more than nedeth/ or whan he cometh perchaūce to late to churche/ or to other werkes of charite: Also whan he vseth his wyfe without souerayn desyre of engendrure to the honour of god/ or for the entent to yelde to his wyfe dette of his body. Also whan he wol not visyte the syke or the prisoner/ if he maye. Also if he loue wyfe or childe or other worldly thyng more than reson requireth. Also if he flatter or blandysshe more than him ought for any necessyte. Also if he mynysshe or withdraw þ almesse of the poure. Also if he apparayle his mete more delycyously than nede is/ or eete to hastely by lycorousnes. Also if he talke vanytees at churche or at goddes seruyce/ or that he be a talker of ydle wordes of folye or vilany/ for he shal yelde acompte of it at the day of dome. Also whan he bihyghteth or assureth to do thinges that he may not performe. Also whan that he by lightnesse or folye mussayeth or scorneth his neyghboure. Also whan he hath any wicked suspecion of thing that he ne wote of fothfastnesse. These thinges & mo without nombre be synnes/ as sayth saynt Austyn. Nowe shal men vnderstonde/ that al be it so þ non erthly man may eschue al venyal synnes/ yet may he restreyne him by the vertuous loue that he hath to our lorde Jesu Christ/ and by prayers and confession and other good werkes/ so that it shal be but lytel grefe. For as sayth saint Augustyn/ If a man loue god in such maner/ that al that euer he dothe is the loue of god/ or for the loue of god verily/ for he vertueth in the loue of god: loke how we moche that one droppe of water/ whiche dothe fall in to a great fatmeres full of fyre amoseth or greueth the vertue of the fyre: in lyke maner amoseth or greueth a venyal synne vnto that man whiche is stedfaste and perfyte in the loue of our sauyour

Jesu

Jesu Christ. Furthermore men may also restrayne and put away penall synne by commynge and receyuynge worthely the body of our sauyour Jesu Christ. Also by tastynge of holy water/by almesse dede/ by generall confession of Confitcor at masse/ and at Complyn/and by blessynges of Bisshopes & prestes/ and by other good workes.

¶ De septem peccatis mortalibus/ et de eorum dependentiis circumstãtiis/ et speciebus.

NOwe it is expedyent to tell/whiche been the seuen deedly synnes/ ꝑ is to saye/chefetaynes of synnes. Al they renne in o sees/ but in dyuers maners.

Nowe been they called seuen Lordes/ for as moche as they be chefe/and spring of al other synnes. Of the rote of these seuen synnes/ thar is Pride the general rote of al harmes. For of this rote springeth certayn braūches: as Ire/ Enuy/ Accidie or slouth/ Auarice or couetise/ to cõmen Vnderstondynge glotonye and lecherye: And eche of these chefe synnes haue her braūches and twigges/ as it shalbe declared in her chapiters folowynge. And though so be/ ꝑ no man can vttrely tel the nõbre of twigges/ and of the harmes that come of pride/ Yet wol I shewe aparte of hem/ as ye shal vnderstonde. There is Inobedience/ avaunting/ypocrisy/despite/arrogance/impudence/swellyng of hert/insolence/elation/impacience/stryfe/contumacy/presumption/irreuerence/pertinacy/veyne glory/ and many other twigges ꝑ I can nat declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despyte the cõmaūdementes of god/ to his souerayns/ and to his gostly father. Avaunter is he that bosteth of the harme or of the boūte that he hath done. Ypocryte is he that hideth to shewe him suche as he is/ and sheweth him to seme suche as he is nat. Despytous is he that hath despeyne of his neighbour/ that is to say/ of his euyn cristen/ or hath despyte to do that hym ought to do. Arrogant is he that thynketh that he hath those boūtes in hym that he hath nat/or weneth that he shulde haue hem by his deserytes/ or elles that he weneth he is that he is nat. Impudente is he/that for his pride hath no shame of his pride ne synne. Swellynge of hert/is whan man reproveth him of harme that he hath done. Insolence is he that dispiseth in his iugement al other folke/ as in regarde of his value/of his cõnyng/ of his speche/ and of his beryng. Elation is whan he ne maye nevther suffre to haue maister ne felowe. Impacient is he that woll nat be taught ne rebuked of his euen/ and by stryfe denyeth trouthe wrongfully/and defendeth his folye. Contumace is he that through his indignation is ayenst every auctorite or power of hem that ben his souerayns. Presumption is whan a man vndertaketh an empryse that him ought nat do or elles that he maye nat do/ and this is called surquidie. Irreuerence is/ whan manne dothe nat honour there as him ought to do/and lobe to be reuerenced. Pertinacy is whan men defende her folye/ & trust to moche on her owne wytte. Vayneglory is for to haue pompe and delyte in his temporel hynesse/ and glorye him in worldly estates. Janglynge is whan men speke to moche before folke and clappeth as a mylle/ and take no kepe what they saye. And yet is there a privy spice of pride/ that wayteth fayre to be salewed or he wol salue/ al be he lesse worthy than that other is. and also he wayteth or desyreth to sytte/ or elles to go aboue hym in the way/or kysse paye/to be encensed/ or go to offryng before his neighbour/ and such semblable thynges ayenst his duetie parauenture/ but that he hath his hert and his entent/in suche a proude despyte/to be magnified and honoured before the people. Nowe been there two maner of prides. One of hem is within the herte of a man/and that other is without. Of whiche forsaid thynges sothly and no thyng I haue sayd apertayne to pride/that is in the herte of man/ & other spices of pride ben without/ but natheles/ that one of these spices of pride is signe of that other/ right as the gay lorcel at the tauerne/ is signe of the wyne that is in the celer. And this is in many thynges: as in speche & countenaunce/ & outrageous array of

clothyng

clothyng: For certes/if ther had be no synne in clothyng/ Crist wolde nat so soone haue noted and spoken of the clothyng of ꝑ riche men in the gospel. And as saint Greg. saith that precious clothynge is coulpable/ for the derthe of it and for his softnesse/ and for his straungenesse and disguisynge: and for the superfluyte/ or for the mordynate scantnesse of it. Alas: may nat a mā se as l our dayes the synful costlewe array of clothynge/ and namely in to moche superfluyte/ or els in to disordynate scantnesse. As to the firste syn in superfluyte of clothynge/ suche that maketh it so dere to the harme of the people/ nat onely the coste of embroudurng/the disguysed endentyng/or barryng/ ounding/ palynge/ wyndyng/ or bendyng/ and semblable waste of clothe in vanytee / But there is also ꝑ costlewe furryng in her gownes/so moche pouī synge of chesel to make hooles/ so moch daggyng of sheres forthe/with the superfluite in length of ꝑ foresaid gownes/ trayling in the donge and in the myre/ on horse and also on fote/ as wel of man as of woman. That al that traylyng is verily as in effecte wasted/ consumed thredebare and rotten with donge/ rather than it is yeue to the poore/to great dōmage of the foresaid poore folke/ and that in sondre wise/ this is to say: that the more the clothe is wasted/ the more muste it cost to the poore people for the scarsenesse. And moreouer/if so be that they wolde yeue suche pouīsed and dagged clothynge to the poore people/it is nat cōuenient to were for her astate/ ne sufficient to her necessyte / to kepe hem fro the distemperaunce of the fyrmament.

Upon that other syde/to speke of the horrible disordynate scantnesse of clothynge/ as been these cutted sloppes or hanselynes/ ꝑ through her shortnesse couer nat the shameful mēbres of man/to wicked entent. Alas/some of hem shewe the bosse of her shap / and the horrible swole membres that semeth syke the malady of Hernia/ in the wrappynge of her hosen / & also the buttockes of hem fare as it were the hinder ꝑte of a she ape in the ful of the mone. And moreouer the wretched swollen mēbres that they shewe through disguysing/ in departyng of her hosen/ in white & red semeth that halfe her shameful preuy mēbres were slayn And if so be that they departe her hosen in other colours/as in white and blewe/ or white and blacke, or blacke and red/ and so forth: Than semeth it as by variaunce of colour ꝑ the halfe parte of her preuy membres/ben ropte by the fire of saynt Anthony/ or by cancer/or other suche myschaūce. Of the hyndre parte of her buttockes it is ful horrible for to se/for certes in that partie of her body there as they purge her fyrthly ordure/that foule partie shewe they to the people proudly in dispyte of honestie/ whiche honestie that Jesu Crist and his frendes observed to shewe in her lyfe.

Now as to the outrageous aray of women/ god wote that though the visages of some of hem seme ful chaste & debonayre/ yet notifye in her araye or atyre/ lyghtnesse & pride: I say not ꝑ honeste l clothing of mā or woman is vncouenable/ but certes the superfluyte or disordynate quātite of clothing is reprouable. Also the synne of ornement or of aparayle is in thynges that appertayne to ryding/ as in compayne/ delycate horses that ben holden for delyte/that ben so fayre/ satte/& costlewe/and also in many a nyce knaue/that is suffrayned bycause of hem/in curious harneys/as in sadels/ croperes/peytrels/& bridels couered with precious clothyng/ & riche barres of plates of golde & of syluer. For whiche god saith by zacharie the prophete/ I wol confounde the ryders of suche horses. These folke take lytel regarde of the ridyng of goddes sone of heuen/ and of hie harneys whan he rode vpon ꝑ asse/ and had non other harneys but the poore clothes of his disciples/ ne we rede not that euer he rode on other beest. I speke this for the fro of superfluite/and not for resonable honestyte/ whan reson it requireth. And more ouer/certes pride is greatly notifyed in holdynge of great meyny/ whan they ben of lytel profyt or of right no profyt/and namely whan that meyne is felonous & dāmageous to the people by hardynesse of high lordshyp/or by wey of offices. For certes suche lordes sell than her lordshippe to the dyuell of hell/ whan they suffrayne the wickednesse of her meyne.

Or

Pride/ whan these folke of lowe degree: as these that kepe hostelries/ sustayne these estates of hir hostelries/ and that is in many manere of diffences: these manere of folke ben the ffyres that folowe the hoyp/ or ells the houndes that folowe the carayn. Suche seruaūd folke fre gil spirituelly her lordshipe: for suche/ thus saith Dauid the prophet. Wicked deth mighte come on those lordshippes/ and god yeue that they mighte discende in to hell/ all do wne/ all do wne: for in her houses ben iniquities and sturdinesse/ and nat god of heuen. And ex tra/ tyl they don amendement/ right as god yaue his blessyng to Pharao by the seruyce of Jacob/ and to Laban by the seruice of Io seph: Right so god wol yeue his curse to sus che lordshippes/ as sustayn ỹ wickednesse of her seruauntes/ but they come to amendement. Pride of the table appereth also ful ofte: for certes/ riche men ben called to festes/ & poore folke ben put away and rebuked. And also in excesse of diuers meates and disshes/ and namely suche manere base meates and disshes brennyng of wylde fyre: peynted and castelled with paper and semblable waste/ so that it is abusyon to thynke. And also in to great curiousnesse of vessel & curiosite of mis stalcy/ by whiche a man is stered more to de lyces of lechery/ if so be that he sette his herte the lesse vpon our lorde Jesu Christ/ certain ly it is a synne. And certenly the delyces must be so great in this case/ ỹ a man might light ly fal by hem in to a deedly synne. The espe ces that sourde of pride/ sothly whā they sour de of malyce ymagyned/ auysed/ & forecast/ or ells of vsage ben deedly syn/ it is no dout. And whan they sourde by frelte vnauysed sodenly/ and sodenly withdrawe ayen/ all be they greuous synnes/ I gesse that they be nat deedly. Nowe mighte men aske/ whereof that pride sourdeth and springeth. I say that some tyme it springeth of the goodes of nature/ som tyme of the goodes of fortune/ and somtyme of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stondeth onely in goodes of body/ or good/ of the soule. Certes goodes of body be ful of body/ strength/ delyuernesse/ beaute/ gentry/ franchise. Goodes of nature of the soule/ ben good wit sharpe vnderstōding/ sub tel engyn/ vertu naturel/ good memoyr. Goo des of fortune/ be riches/ hye degrees of lord shipe/ praysinges of the people. Goodes of grace: ben science/ power to suffer spirit tra uayle/ benygne/ vertuous contēplation/ vnd stōding of tēptation/ & semblable thyng: of whiche forsaid goodes certes it is a ful great folye/ a man to haue pride in any of hem al. Nowe/ as for to speke of goodes of nature/ god wot/ ỹ somtyme we haue hem in nature/ as moch to our damage as to our profite. As to speke of hele of body/ truly it passeth ful light ly/ & also it is ful oft occasion of sickenesse of the soule: for god wot ỹ flesh is a great enes my to the soule: & therfore ỹ more ỹ the body is hole/ the more be we in peril to fal. Also for to haue pride in his strength of body/ it is an hye folye: for certes the flesshe coueteth ayenst the spirit: & the more strong ỹ the flesshe is/ ỹ ouer may the soule be. And ouer al this stre gth of body & worldly hardinesse/ causeth ful ofte many man to peril & myschaūce. & also to haue pride of his gentry/ is right great folye: for oftyme ỹ gentry of the body/ taketh away the gentry of the soule: & also we ben al of o father and mother: & al we ben of o nature/ rotten & corrupt/ bothe riche & poore. Forsoth o maner gentry is for to praise/ that appareil leth mannes courage. Wytte/ vertue/ & mora lyte/ maketh hym Christes childe. For truste wel/ that ouer what man that syn hath mas stery/ he is a very churle to synne.

Nowe ben there general signes of gentyl nesse: as eschewyng of vyce & ribaudye/ and seruage of synne: in worde/ in werke/ and cō tynuaunce and vsyng of vertue/ curtesy/ and clennesse/ and to be liberall: that is to saye/ large by measure: for that that passeth mea sure/ is folye and syn: Another is to remēbre hym of bounte/ that he of other folke hath re ceyued: Another is to be benygne to his good subiectes. Wherfore saith Seneke: there is nothyng more couenable to a man of hyghe astate/ than debonairte and pyte. And ther fore these flyes that men cal bees/ whan they make her hyngy/ they chese one that hath no prykke/ wherwith he maye stynge.

Anon

Another is/ may to haue a noble hert and a diligent/ to attayne to the high vertuous thynges. Nowe certes/ a man to haue pride in the goodes of grace/is also an outrageous folye: for those giftes of grace that shulde haue tourned hym to goodnesse/ and to medicyn/ tourneth him to venym and confusion/ as saith saynt Grego. Certes also/ who so hath pride in the goodesse of fortune/ he is a ful great fole: For sōtyme is a man a great lorde by the mouue/that is a captyse/ a wrecche or it be night: and somtyme the riches of a man is cause of his deth. Somtyme the desyres of a man/ is cause of greuous malady through whiche he dieth. Certes/ the cōmendation of the people is/ somtyme ful false/ & brotel for to trust. This day they prayse/ to morowe they blame. God wot/ desire to haue cōmēdation of ỳ people/ hath caused deth to many a busy man. Nowe sith that so is/ that ye haue vnderstonde what is pride/ and whiche be the speces of it/and whens it sourdeth and springeth: nowe ye shal vnderstōde whiche is the remedy ayenst it. Humilyte or meknesse is the remedy ayenst pride/ that is a vertue/ through whiche a man hathe verey knowlege of him selfe/ & holdeth of him selfe not pure ne depnte/ as in regarde of his desertes/consideryng euer his freelte. Nowe ben there thre maner of humilites: As humilyte in herte/ another humilite is in mouth/ and the thirde is in workes. The humilite in hert is in four maners: That one is/ whan a mā holdeth him self as nought worth before god of heuen. The seconde is/ whan he dispiseth non other man. The third is/ whan he ne recketh nat/ though men hold him nought worthe. And the fourth is/ whan he is nat sory of his humiliation. Also the humilite of mouth is in foure thynges. In a temperate speche/ in humilite of speche/and whan he confesseth with his owne mouth/ that he is such as him thynketh/ that he is in his herte: Another is/ whan he praiseth the bounte of another man and nothynge therof myniſſheth. Humilite also in werke/ is in four maners. The first is/ whan he putteth other men before him: the seconde is to chese the lowest place euer al/ the thirde is/ gladly to assent to good counseile/ the fourth is/ to stonde gladly to the award of his soueraine/ or of him that is in hier degre: Certain this is gret werke of humilite.

¶ De Inuidia.

After Pride woll I speke of the foule synne of Enuy/ whiche that is after the worde of ỳ philosofer/ sorowe of other mennes prosperite. And after the worde of saynt Augustin: it is sorowe of other mennes welthe and the ioye of other mennes harm. This foule synne is playnly agaynst the holygost: al be it so/that euery synne is ayenst the holygost: yet natheles/ for asmoch as bounte appartayneth properly to the holigost: and enuy metheth properly of malyce/therfore it is properly ayenst the bounte of the holigost. Nowe hath malyce two speces/that is to saye/ hardnesse of herte in wickednesse/ or elles the fleshe of a man is so blynde/ that he conspireth nat that he is in syn/or recketh nat that he is in synne/ whiche is the hardynesse of the deuyll. That other spece of Enuy is/ whan that a man denyeth trouth/ whan he knoweth ỳ it is trouth and also whan he repenteth the grace that god hath yeue to his neighbour: & al this is by enuy. Certes/than is enuy the worst synne that is/ for softly al other synnes be somtyme ỳ ayenst o special vertue: but certes/ enuy is ayenst al vertues and al goodnesse. For it is sory ayenst al the bountes of his neighbour: and in this maner/ it is dyuers from al other synnes. Alas: for there ne is no synne that it ne hath some delyte in it selfe/ saue only Enuye/ that euer hath in it selfe angoysshe & sorowe. The speces of Enuy ben these: there is first sorowe of other mens goodnesse and of her prosperyte/ and prosperyte is symply matre of ioye: Than is Enuye a synne ayenst kynde. The seconde spece of Enuye/is ioye of other mens harme/ & that is properly felt to the dyuel/ that euer reioyseth him of mannes harme. Of these two speces cometh backbytyng/ and this synne of backbytyng is/ whan he secretly seith thynges (by contractyng both certayne speches) to the vilanye of his neighbour: and praiseth his neighbour by a wicked maner

fal

for he wolleth alway a wicked knot at the laste ende: alwaye he maketh a but at the laste ende that is digne of more blame/than is worth al the playsyng. The seconde specie is/that if a man be good/or doth or sayth a thyng to good entent/the backbyter wol turne al that goodnesse vp so downe/to his shrewde entent. The shrewde is to empuysh the bontie of his neyghbour. The fourthe specie of backbytynge is this/that if men spoke goodnesse of a man/than wol the backbyter saye: Perfay suche a man is yet better than he/I dispraysyng of hym that men praysse. The fyfthe specie is this/for to consent gladly and herke gladly to the harme that men spoke of other folke: This synne is ful great/& ay encreseth after the wicked entent of the backbyter. After backbityng cometh grutchyng or murmuration/and somtyme it springeth of impacience ayenst god/and somtyme ayenst man. Ayenst god it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst payne of hel/or ayenst pouerte/or losse of catell/or ayenst rayne or tempest/or els grutcheth that shrewes haue prosperite/or ela for that good men haue aduersite: & al these thynges shulde men suffre paciently/for they come by the rightful ingrmēt and ordynaunce of god. Somtyme cometh grutchyng of auarice/as Judas grutched ayenst Mandeleyn/whan she anoynted the heed of our lorde Jesu Christe/with her precious oyntment. This maner murmuryng is suche as whan man grutcheth of goodnesse that hym selfe doth/or that other folke done of her owne catell. Somtyme cometh murmure of pride/as whan Symon the Pharisee grutched ayenst Mandeleyn/whan she approched to Jesu christ and wept at his fete for her synnes. And somtyme it sourdeth of enuye/whan men discouer a mans harme that was preuy/or bereth hym in honde thyng that is falce. Murmure also is ofte amonge seruantes that grutche whan her souerayns bydde hem do lesful thynges/and for as moche as they dare not openly withsay the cōmaundement of her souerayns/yet wol they say harme and grutche & murmure preuyly for very despyte: whiche wordes they call the deuels pater noster/though so be that the deuel god neuer pater noster/but the feende selfe peneth it such a name. Somtyme it cometh of pryde or prowd hate/that norissheth rancour in the herte/as afterwarde I shal declare. Than cometh also bytternesse of herte/that to we which bytternesse euery good dede of his neyghbour semeth to hym bytter & vnsauery. Than cometh discorde that vnbyndeth al maner of frendshyp. Than cometh frownyng of his neyghbour/al do he neuer so wel. Than cometh accusyng/as whan man seketh occasyon to anoye his neyghbour/whiche is lyke the crafte of the deuel/that wayteth bothe day and nyght to accuse vs al. Than cometh maligne/throughe whiche a man anoyeth his neyghbour priuely if he may: and if he maye not/algate his wicked wyl shal not let as for to brenne his house priuely/or enpoyson or sle his beestes/and semblable thynges. Now we wol I speke of the remedye ayenst this foule synne of enuye. First is the loue of god principally/and louyng of his neyghbour as hym selfe: for sothly that one ne may not be without that other. And trust wel that in the name of thy neyghbour thou shalt vnderstonde the name of thy brother/for certes al we haue one father flesshly and one mother/that is to saye Adam & Eue/and also one father spyrituel/that is god of heuen. Thy neyghbour art thou bounde for to loue/and wyl hym al goodnesse/and therfore sayth the god: Loue thy neyghbour as thy selfe/that is to say/to saluation bothe of lyfe and soule. And more ouer thou shalte loue hym in worde & in benigne admonesshing and chastysyng/and comfort hym in his noyaunces/& pray for hym with al thy herte. And in dede thou shalt loue hym in suche wyse that thou shalte do to hym in charyte/as thou woldest that it were done to thyn owen person: and therfore thou ne shalte do hym no damage in wicked worde/ne harme in his body ne in his catell/ne in his soule by entysyng of wicked ensample. Thou shalte not despyse his wyse ne name of his thynges. Vnderstonde also that in the name of neyghbour is comprehended his enuye: Certes man shal loue his enemye by the cōmaundement of god: & sothly thy frende thou shalte loue in god. And sayst thou enemye shalte thou loue for goddes sake/by his com-

maundement/ for if it were reason that man shulde hate his enemy/ forsothe god nolde not receyue vs to his loue that ben his enemyes. Ayenst thre maner of wronges ꝑ his enemye dothe to hym/ he shal do thre thynges/ as thus: ayenst hate and rancoure of hert/ he shal loue hym in hert: Ayenst chyding & wicked wordes/ he shal praye for his enemye: Ayenst wicked dedes/ he shal do hym bountie. For Ihesu Crist saith Loue your enemyes/ and praye for hem that speke you harme/ and for hem that chace and pursue you: and do bountie to hem that hate you. Lo/ thus cōmaundeth vs our lorde Jesu Crist to do to our enemyes: Forsothe nature dicteth vs to loue our frendes/ and parfay our enemyes haue more nede of loue thā our frendes/ & they that more nede haue/ certes to hem shal men do goodnesse. And certes in that dede haue we remembraunce of the loue of Jesu Crist that dyed for his enemyes: And in as moche as that loue is more greuous to perfourme/ so moche is the more gret the meryte/ and therfore the loupnge of our enemye hath confounded the dyuels venyme: For right as the dyuel is confounded by humylite/ right so is he wounded to the deth by the loue of our enemy/ certes than is loue the medicyn that casteth out the venym of enuye fro mans herte. The spyces of this place shal be more largely declared in her chapiters folowyng.

¶ De Ira.

After Enuye wol I discryue the synne of Ire/ for sothly who so hath enuye vpon his neyghbour/ anon he wol comenly synde hym a mater of wrathe in worde or in dede/ ayenst him to whom he hath enuye: And as wel cometh ire of pride as of enuy/ for sothly he ꝑ is proude or enuyous is lightly wroth. This syn of ire/ after the discrypyng of saint Austyn is wicked wyl to be auēged by worde or by dede. Ire after the philosopher/ is the feruent bloode of man yquicked in his herte/ through which he wolde harme to hym that he hateth: for certes the herte of man by eschaufing a mouyng of his bloode/ weyeth so troubled/ that it is out of al maner of iugement of reason. But ye shal vnderstonde that Ire is in two maneres/ that one of hem is good/ and that other is wicked. The good yre is by resonsye of goodnes/ through which a mā is wroth with wickednesse/ & ayenst wickednesse. And therfore sayth a wyse man/ that ire is bet than playe. This ire is with debonairte/ and it is wrothe without bytternesse/ not wrothe ayenst the man/ but wrothe with the misdede of the man: As sayth the prophete Dauid: Irascimini/ et nolite peccare. Nowe vnderstōde that wicked ire is in two maners/ that is to saye/ sodayne ire or hasty ire without auysement & consentyng of reson: The meanynge and the sence of this is/ that the reson of a man ne consent not to that sodayne ire/ and than is it venyall. Another ire is ful wicked/ that cometh of felonye of herte/ auysed & caste before/ with wicked wyl to do vengeaunce/ and therto the reson cōsenteth: and sothly this is deedly syn. This ire is so displesaunt to god/ that it troubleth his house/ and chaseth the holy goost out of mans soule/ and wasteth & distroyeth the lyknesse of god/ that is to say/ the vertue that is in mans soule/ and putteth in hym the lyknesse of the dyuel/ and taketh the man fro god that is his rightful lorde. This is a ful great plesaunce to the dyuel/ for it is the dyuels forneyes that is eschaufed with the fyre of hell: For certes right so as fyre is more mighty to distroy erthly thynges than any other elemēt/ right so ire is mighty to distrope al spyritual thynges. Loke how we that fyre of smale coles that ben almoste deed vnder asshen/ wol reuyue or quicke ayen whan they ben touched w' brimstone/ right so ire wol euermore quicken ayen whan it is touched by the pride that is couered in mans herte. For certes fyre ne may not come out of nothyng/ but if it were fyrst in ꝑ same thing naturally: as fyre is drawen out of flyntes with stele. And right so as pride is many tymes mater of ire/ right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. There is a mener tree/ as saithe saynt Isodore/ that whan a man maketh fyre of the sayde tree/ and couere the coles of it with asshen/ sothly the fyre of it wol laste a yere or more: And right so fareth it of rancour whan it is ones conceyued in the

hertes

herte of some man / certes it wolle lasse peraduenture from one Ester day vntyll an other Ester day or more. But certes that same man is ful ferre from the mercy of god al ꝑ while.

In this forsayd dyuels sommers there forge thre shrewes: Pride that ayr bloweth and enflameth the eyre by chydyng and wicked wordes. Than stondeth enuye and holdeth hatte yon in the eyre vpon the herte of man with a payre of longe tonges of longe rancour. And than stondeth the spume of cõtumelie or strife and chefte / and batereth and forgeth by despeyrous reprouynges. Certes this cursed eyr anoyeth bothe to the man eyen selfe and also his neyghbour / For sothely almoste al the harme or damage that any man dothe to his neyghbour cõmeth of wrathe: for certes outragous wrathe dothe al that euer the foule fende wylleth or commaundeth hym / for he ne sparyth neyther our lorde Jesu Christ / neither his swete mother. And in his outragious angre and yre / alas alas / ful many and dyuers at that tyme / seleth in his herte ful wyckedly bothe of Christ and also of al his halowes: Is not this a cursed eyre: yes certes. Alas it taketh fro many his wytte and his reason / and all his debonayre eyre spyrituel that shulde kepe his soule. Certes it withdrawyth also goddes dewe lordshyp / that is mans soule / and the soue of his neyghbours. It stryueth also al daye ayenst trouthe / it reueth hym the quyete of his herte / and subuerteth his soule.

Of yre cometh these stynkyng engendrures. First hate / ꝑ is olde wrath / Discorde / thorough whyche a man forsaketh his olde frende that he hath loued ful longe. And than cometh werre and euery maner of wrõge that a man dothe to his neyghbourre in body or in catell. Of this cursed synne of yre cometh also manslaughter. And vnderstonde wel that homicide / that is manslaughter is in dyuers wyse:

Some manere of homycide is spyrituell / and some is bodily. Spirituel manslaughter is in. vi. thynges. First ꝑ hate as sayth sayn Johan: He that hateth his brother / is an homycide. Homicide is also by backbityng / of whyche backbityng sayth Salomon / that they haue two swerdes / with whyche they slee her neyghbourre: For sothly as wicked is to take fro hym his good name as his lyfe. Homicide is also in prayenge of wicked counsell by fraude / as for to yeue counsayle to areyse wrongful customes / and talages. Of whyche sayth Salomon: A lyon rounge and a berre hongry / be lyke to the cruell lordes in withholdyng or abredgyng of the shepe or the hyre of the wages of seruauntes / or elles in vsurye / or in withdrawynge of the almesse of poure folke. For whyche the wyse man sayth / Feedeth hym that almoste dyeth for honger / for sothely but if ye fede hym ye slee hym. And al these ben deedly synnes. Bodyly manslaughter is whan thou sleest hym with thy tonge: An other maner is / whan thou commaundest to slee a man / or elles yeuest counsayle to slee a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure maneres. That one is by lawe / right as a Justyce dampneth hym that is coulpable to the dethe: But let the Justyce be ware that he do it rightfully / and that he do it not for despyte to spylle bloode / but for kepynge of rightwysnesse. An other homicide is done for necessyte / as whan a man sleeth an other in his defence / and that he ne maye none other wyse escape without slaughter of his aduersarye / he dothe synne / and he shal beare penaunce as for deedly synne. Also if a man by case or aduenture shote an arowe or caste a stone / with which he sleeth a man / he is an homicide. Also if a woman by negligẽce ouerlyeth her childe in her sleepynge / it is homicide & deedly synne. Also whan man disturbleth conception of a chylde / and maketh a woman eyther bareyne by drynkynge of venemous herbes / thorough whyche she may not conceyue / or sleeth a chylde by dryuen / or elles putteth certayne materyall thynges in her secret places to slee the chylde / or elles doth vnkyndely synne / by whyche a man or a woman shedeth her nature in manere or in a place there as a chylde maye not be conceyued. Or elles if so be that a woman hath conceyued / and hurteth her selfe / and by that mysshappe the chylde is slayne / yet it is homicide. What say we of those women that murdren her children for dyuerse of eschewynge of worldly shame: Certes it is an horrible

I.iii. hor

homicide. Homicide is also if a man approche to a woman by despyte of lechery/ thorough whiche ꝑ childe is perisshed/ or els sleeth a woman wetyngly/ through whiche she leseth her chylde: Al these ben homicides and horrible deedly synnes. Yet come there of more synnes/ as well in worde as in thought/ and dede: As he that arretteth upon god/ or blameth god of the thyng of whiche he is hym selfe gylty/ or dispyseth god and al his halowes/ as done the cursed hasardours in dyuers coũtreys: This cursed synne done they/ whan they sele in her herte sul wickedly of god and of his halowes. Also whan they trete vnreuerẽtly the sacrament of the auter/ that synne is so great that vnneth it may be released/ but that the mercy of god passeth al his werkes/ it is so great and he so benygne. Than cometh of ire an utterly angre/ whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to leaue his synne: Than wol he be angry/ and answere hoketly and angerly/ or defende or excuse his synne by vnstedfastnesse of his flesshe/ or els he dyd it for to holde companye with his felowes/ or els he sayth the fende entyced him/ or els he dothe it for his youthe/ or els his complexion is so corragious that he may not forbeare/ or els it is his destenye he sayth vnto a certayne age/ or els he sayth it cometh him of gentylnesse of his auncestres/ and semblable thynges. Al these maner of folke so wrappe hem in her synnes/ that they ne wol not delyuer hemselfe: For sothly no wyght that excuseth him selfe wylfully of his synne/ may not be delyuered of his synne tyl that he mekely beknoweth his synne. After this than cometh swearynge/ that is expresse ayenst the cõmaundement of god/ and this befalleth often tyme of angre and of ire. God sayth/ Thou shalte not take the name of thy lorde god in veyne or in vdel. Also our lorde Jesu Christ sayth by the worde of sayute Mathewe: Ne wyl ye not swere in al maner/ neyther by heuen/ for it is goddes trone/ ne by erthe/ for it is the benche of his fete/ ne by Hierusalem/ for it is the cyte of a great kynge/ ne by thyn heed/ for thou mayste not make an heere neyther white ne blacke: but saye by youre worde/ ye

ye/ naye naye: and what that is more/ it is of vuel. Thus sayth Christ. For Christes sake sweare not so synfully in dismembrynge of Christ: By soule/ herte/ bones/ and body. for certes it semeth that ye thynke that the cursed iewes ne dismembred not ynoughe the precyous persone of Christ/ but ye dismembre him more. And if so be that the lawe compel you to swere/ than ruleth you after the lawe of god in youre swerynge/ as sayth Jeremie.iiii.cap. Thou shalte depe thie condycions/ thou shalt sweare in trouthe/ in dome and in rightwysenesse/ this is to saye/ thou shalte swearr sothe/ For euery lesynge is ayenst Christ/ for Christ is very trouthe. And thynke wel this that euery great swearer not compelled lawfully to swere/ the plage shal not departe fro his house/ whyle he vseth suche vnlefful swearynge. Thou shalte swere also in dome/ whan thou arte constreyned by thy domes man to witnesse trouthe: Also thou shalte not sweare for enuye/ neyther for fauour/ neyther for mede or rewarde/ but onely for rightwysnesse and for declarynge of it to the honour and worshyppe of god/ and to the aydynge and helpe of thy euyn christen. And therfore euery man that taketh goddes name in vdell/ or falsely sweareth with his mouthe/ or els taketh an hym the name of Christ to be called a christen man/ and lyueth ayenst Christes lyuynge and his techynge/ al they take goddes name in vdell. Loke also what sayth sayut Peter/ Actuum iiii.capitu. Non est aliud nomen sub celo.&c. There is none other name sayth sayut Peter vnder heuen yeue to men/ in whiche they may be saued/ that is to say/ but the name of Jesu Christ. Take hede ek howe precious is the name of Jesu Christ/ as sayth sayute Poule/ ad Philipenses.ii. In nomine Jesu.&c. That in the name of Jesu euery kne of heuenly creatures/ erthly/ and of hell shulde bowe/ for it is so hye and so worshypfull/ that the cursed fende in hell shulde tremble to here it named. Than semeth it that men that sweare so horribly by his blessed name/ that they dispyse it more boldely than the cursed iewes/ or els the deuel that trembleth whan he herith his name.

Nowe certes sythe that swearynge/ but if it

be

he lawfully done/ is so hyely defended/ macche more is forswerynge falsely/ and yet nedelesse.

What say we also of hem that delyte hem in swearyng/ and holde it a gentrye or a manly dede to sweare great othes: And what of hem that of very vsage ne cease not to sweare grete othes/ al be the cause not worthe a strawe: Certes this is horrible synne. Swearyng so dedely is also a great syn. But let vs go now to that horrible synne swearynge of adiuracion & coniuracion/ as done these false enchantours or nygramācers i bassyns ful of water/ or in a bright swerde/ in a cercle/ in a fyre/ or in the sholderbone of a shepe: I can not saye but that they done cursedly and dampnably ayenst Ihesu/ & al the sayth of holy churche.

What saye we of hem that byleue on Dremes/ as by flyght or by noyse of brides or of beestes/ or by sorte/ by Geomancie/ by dremes/ by chirkyng of doores or crakyng of houses/ by gnawyng of rattes/ and suche manere wretchednesse? Certes al these thynges ben defended by god and holy churche/ for whiche they ben accursed tyl they come to amendement that ony suche fylthe sette her byleue. Charmes for woundes or maladye of men or of beestes/ if they take any effecte/ it may be paraventure that god suffereth it/ for folke shulde yeue the more fayth & reuerence to his name.

Nowe wol I speke of leasynges whiche generally is falsse signifyaunce of worde in entent to deceyue his euen cristen. Some leasyng/ is of whiche there cometh none auauntage to no wight/ and some leasynge turneth to the profyte or ease of a man/ and to the damage of a nother man. A nother leasynge is for to saue his lyfe or his catel/ whiche cometh of delyte for to lye/ in whiche delyte they wol forge a longe tale/ & peynt it with al circumstaunces/ where al the tale of the grounde is falsse. Some leasyng cometh for he wol fulfylle his wordes: Some leasynge cometh of recchelesnesse without auysement/ and semblable thynges. Lette vs nowe touche the lyte of flaterye/ whiche ne cometh not gladly but for drede/ or for rewerdyse. Flaterye is generally wrongful praysyng. Flatterers ben the deuils nourrices/ that nourisshe his chyldren with mylke of losyngerye: Forsoth Salomon sayth that flatery is worse than detraction/ for sometyme detraction maketh an hautayne man be the more humble/ for he dredeth detraction/ but certes flatery maketh a man enhaunce his hert and his countenaunce. Flatterers be the deuils enchantours/ for they make a man to wene hym selfe be lyke/ that he is not lyke. Those be lyke to Judas that betray a man to sel hi to his enemy. Flatterers ben the deuils chapleyns that euer syng Placebo. I reken flaterye in the vyces of ire: for ofte tyme if a man be wrothe with a nother/ than wol he flatter some wight to sustayne hym in his quarell. Spyke we nowe of suche cursyng as cometh of irous herte. Malyson generally may be sayd euery manere power of harme: Suche cursynge bereueth man fro the regne of god/ as sayth saynt Poule. And ofte tyme suche cursynge wrongfully returneth ayen to hym that curseth/ as byrde that turneth ayen to his owne nest. And ouer al thyng men ought eschewe to curse her children and yeue to the deuil her engendrure as ferre forthe as in hem is: certes it is great peryl and great synne. Lette vs than speke of chydyng and reprocche/ whiche ben full great wounder in mans herte/ for they vnsowe the semes of frendshyp in mans herte: for certes vnneth maye a man playnly be accorded with hym/ that him openly hath reuyled and repreued/ and disclaundred: This is a ful gastly synne as Ihesu sayth in the gospel. And take hede nowe that he that repreueth his neyghbourr/ eyther he repreueth hym by some harme of payne that he hath vpon his body/ as meselry/ croked/ harlot/ or by some synne that he dothe. Nowe if he repreue him by harme of payne/ than turneth the repreue to Jesu Ihesu: for payne is sende by the right wyse sonde of god/ and by his suffraunce/ be it meselry/ meyme/ or maladye: And if he repreue him vncharytably of synne/ as thou holour/ thou dronkelewe harlot/ and so forthe. Than pertayneth that to the reuoysynge of the deuil/ whiche euer hath ioy that men done synne. And certes chydyng may not come but of vylaynous herte/ for after the habundaunce of the herte

I.iii. speketh

speketh the mouthe ful ofte. And ye shal vnderstonde/ that lose by any waye whan any man shal chastyse or correcte another/ that he bewarc from chidyng or repreuyng: for truely but he bewarc/ he maye ful lightly quicken the fyre of angre and of wrathe/ whiche he shulde quenche: And peraunture sleeth him whiche he myght chastyse with benignyte.

For as sayth Salomon: The amiable tonge is the tree of lyfe/ that is to saye/ of lyfe spyrytuel. And sothly a dissolute tonge sleeth the spyrites of hym that repreueth/ and also of him whiche is repreued. Lo/ what sayth saint Augustyn: There is nothynge so lyke the dyuels childe/ as he whiche ofte chydeth.

A seruaunt of god behoueth not to chide. And though that chydynge be a vylaynous thyng betwyxt al maner folke/ yet it is certes most vncouenable bytwene a man and his wyfe/ for there is neuer rest. And therfore sayth Salomon: An house that is vncouered and droppyng and a chydyng wyfe/ ben a lyke.

A man whiche is in a dropppnge house in many places/ thoughe he eschewe the droppynge in o place/ it droppeth on him in a nother place: So fareth it by a chydynge wyfe/ if she chyde hym in one place she woll chyde him in a nother: And therfore better a greatly more plesaunt is a morsel of sykell gobet of breed with ioye/ than an house fylled full of delyces with chydynge and gnerrynge/ sayth Salomon. Saynt Poule sayth: O ye women/ beth ye subgette to your husbondes/ as you behoueth and ought in god: And ye men loueth your wyues/ ad Colocenses. iii.

Afterwarde speke we of scornynge whiche is a wicked synne/ and namely whan he scorneth a man for his good werkes: For certes suche scorners fare lyke the foule tode/ that maye not endure to smelle the swete sauour of the vyne whan it flourysseth. These scorners ben partyng felowes with the dyuel/ for they haue ioye whan the dyuel wynneth/ and sorowe if he leseth. They ben aduersaryes of Jesu Christ/ for they hate that he loueth/ that is to saye/ saluation of soule.

Speke we nowe of wicked counsayle/ the whiche is a traytour/ for he discreueth hym that trusteth in him: Vt Achitofel ad Salomonem. But natheless/ yet is his wycked counsayle first ayenst him selfe/ for as sayth the wyse man: euery false hypocrite hath this propertie in him selfe/ that he that woll anoye a nother man/ he anoyeth firste him selfe. And men shal vnderstonde/ that man shall not take his counsayle of false folke/ ne of angrye folke/ or greuous folke/ ne of folke that loue specially to moche worldly folke/ namely in counsaylynge of soules.

Nowe cometh the synne of hem that sowe and make discorde amonge folke/ whiche is a synne that Christ hateth vtterly/ and no wonder is: for he deyde for to make concorde. And more shame do they to Christ than dyd they that him crucifyed: For god loueth better that frendshyp be amonges folke than he dyd his owne body/ whiche that he gaue for vnyte. Therfore ben they lykened to the dyuel that euer be aboute to make discorde. Nowe cometh the synne of double tonge/ such as speke fayre before folke/ and wickedly behynde/ or els they make semblaūt as though they spake of good entencion/ or els in game and playe/ and yet they speke of wicked entent.

Nowe cometh bewrayenge of counsayle/ throughe whiche a man is diffamed: Certes vnneth maye he restore the domage. Nowe cometh menace/ that is an open folye/ for he that ofte menaceth/ he thretteth more than he may performe ful ofte tyme. Nowe cometh idell wordes/ that is without profyte of hym that speketh the wordes/ & also of him that herkeneth the wordes: Or els idel wordes ben those that ben nedelesse or without entent of naturel profyte. And al be it that idel wordes be somtyme venyal syn/ yet shulde men doute hem/ for we shal yeue rekenynge of hem before god. Nowe cometh iangelyng that may not be without synne. And as sayth Salomon: it is a signe of apert folye. And therfore a philosopher sayd whan men asked him howe that he shulde please the people/ he answerde: Do many good werkes & speke few wordes. After this cometh the synne of vsperies/ that ben the dyuels apes/ for they make folke to laughe at her iaperye/ as folke do

at

at the gawdes of an ape: Whiche iapes de-
fendeth sayncte Poule. Loke how we that ver-
tuous wordes and holy cõforte hem that tra-
uayle in the seruyce of Ihusi. Right so com-
forteth the villanous wordes and thackes of
wycked hem/ that trauayle in the seruyce of the
deuyll. These been the synnes of the tonge/
that come of yre and of other synnes.

¶ The remedy ayenst Ire.

The remedy ayenst Ire/ is a vertue ỹ men
cal Mansuetude/ that is Debonairte/ and al-
so another vertue that men clepe Pacience or
sufferaunce. Debonairte withdrawyth and
refrepneth the steerynges and mouynges of
mannes corage in herte/ in suche maner that
they ne ſtyppe nat out by angre ne yre. Suf-
feraunce suffreth swetely al the anoyances &
wronges that men done to man outwarde.
Sayncte Jerome sayth this of debonairte/ that
it dothe no harm to no wight/ ne sayth: ne for
no harme that men do ne saye/ he ne chafeth a
penyt reason. This vertue sometyme cometh
of nature: for as sayth ỹ philosopher/ A man
is a quycke thyng by nature/ debonaire & tre-
table to goodnesse: but whan debonairte is
enfourmed of grace/ than it is the more worth.
Pacience is another remedy ayenst ire/ and
is a vertue that suffreth swetely euery mans
ney goodnesse/ and is nat wroth for no harm
that is done to hym. The philosopher sayth/
that pacience is the vertue that suffreth debo-
nairly al the outrages of aduersyte/ & eurry
wicked worde. This vertue maketh a man
lyke to god/ and maketh hym goddes owne
childe: as sayth Ihusi. This vertue discomfy
teth thyne enemy. And therfore sayth the wise
man: If thou wolde venquesshe thyn enemy
lerne to suffre. And thou shalte vnderstonde
that a man suffreth four maner of greuaun-
ces in outwarde thynges/ ayenst the whiche
four he must haue four maner of pacences.
The firſte greuaunce is of wycked wordes/
whiche suffred Jesu Ihusi without grutchig
ful pacently/ whan they were dispyced hym
ful ofte. Suffre thou therfore pacently/ for
the Wyse man sayth: If thou stryue with a
foole/ though the foole be wroth or though he
laugh/ al waye shalt thou haue no rest. That
other greuaunce outwarde is to haue domage
of thy catell: There ayenst suffred Ihusi ful
pacently/ whan he was despoyled of al that
he had in this lyfe/ and that was but his clo-
thes. The thirde greuaunce is a man to haue
harme in his body: That suffred Ihusi full
pacently in al his passyon. The fourth gre-
uaunce is in outragyous labourc in werkes:
wherfore I saye/ that folke that make her ser-
uauntes to trauayle to greuously or out of
tyme/ as in holy dayes/ sothly they do great
synne. Here ayenst suffred Ihusi ful pacy-
ently/ and taught vs pacyence/ whan he bare
vpon his blessed shulders ỹ crosse/ vpon whi-
che he should suffre dispytous dethe. Here may
men lerne to be patient/ for certes not onely
chrysten be pacyent for loue of Jesu Ihusi/
and for reward of the blessed lyfe that is per-
durable/ but certes the olde paynems that ne-
uer were chrystened/ comended and vsed the
vertue of pacience. A philosopher vpon a
tyme that wold haue beate his disciple for his
great trespace/ for which he was moued/ and
brought a rodde to beate the childe/ and whan
this chylde sawe the rodde/ he sayd to his ma-
ster: What thynke ye to do? I woll beate the
sayd the mayster for thy correction: Forsothe
sayd the childe/ ye ought first correct your selfe
that haue lost al your pacience for the offence
of a childe. Forsothe sayd the mayster al we-
pyng/ thou sayest sothe: Haue thou the rodde
my dere childe/ and correcte me for myn im-
pacience. Of pacience cometh obedience/ thrugh
whiche a man is obedient to Ihusi & to al hem
to whuche he ought be obedient in Ihusi. And
vnderstonde wel ỹ obedience is perfyte whan
that a man dothe gladly & hastely with good
hert entierly/ al that he shulde do. Obedyence
generally is to performe the doctryne of god
and of his soueraignes/ to whiche hym ought
to be obeysaunt in al right wisnesse.

¶ De Accidia.

After the synnes of Enuy & yre/ now wol I
speke of the synne of Accidie: for enuy blyn-
deth the hert of a man/ & yre troubleth a man
and accidie maketh hym heuy/ thoughtful & pe-
nyf. Enuy & ire make bitternesse in hert/ which
bitternesse is moder of accidie/ & taketh fro hi

the

the soure of al goodnesse/than is accidie the anguyssche of trouble of hert. And sayut Augustyn saith: It is anoye of goodnesse & anoye of harme. Certes this is a dampnable syn/ for it dothe wronge to Jesu Christ/in as moche as it benómeth the service that men ought do to Christ/as saithe Salomon: but accidie dothe no suche diligence. He dothe al thynge with anoye and with wawnesse/ slacknesse/ and excusation: With ydelnesse and vnlust.

For whiche the boke sayethe: A cursed be he that dothe the seruyce of god negligently. Than is accidie enemy to euery estate of mã. For certes thestate of man is in thre maners.

Either it is in the estate of Innocency/ as was the estate of Adam before that he fyl in to synne/ in which estate he was holde to worke/ as in prayssyng & laudyng god. Another estate is the estate of synful men: in whiche estate men ben holden to labour in prayeng to god for amendement of her synnes/ & that he wol graunt hem to ryse out of her synnes.

Another estate is the state of grace/ in whiche state he is holden to workes of penytence: and certes to al these thinges is accidie cõtrary/ for he loueth no busynesse at al. Nowe certes/this foule synne accidie is also a ful grete enemy to the ysselode of ỹ body/ for it ne hath no purueyance ayenst tẽporel necessite/ for it forsloweth/ forslogeth/and distroyeth al goodes tẽporel by rechelesnesse. The. iiii. thynge is/ ỹ accidie is lyke hem that ben in the payne of hel/ bicause of her slouthe & heuynesse: for they that be dãpned ben so bounde/ that they may neither wel do ne thynke. Of accidie cometh first ỹ a man is anoyed & encombred to do any goodnesse/& maketh that god hath abhominatiõ of suche accidie/ as saithe sayut John. Nowe cometh slouth that wol nat suffer no hardnesse ne penaũce: for sothly slouth is so tender & so delycate/as saith Salomon/ that he wol suffre no hardnesse ne penaũce/ & therfore he marreth al ỹ he doth. Ayenst this rotten syn of accidie & slouth/ shulde men exercise hem selfe & vse hem to do good workes: and manly & vertuously catche corage to do/ thynkyng that our lorde Jesu Christ quyteth euery good dede/ be it neuer so lyte. Vsage of labour is a great thynge. For it maketh/ as saithe sayut Bernarde/ the labourer to haue stronge armes and herde senewes: & slouthe maketh hem feble/ and tender. Than cometh drede to begyn to worke any good workes. For certes he that entryeth to synne/ hym thynketh it is so great an empryse for to vndertake the workes of goodnesse/ and entreth in his herte/ that the circumstaunces of goodnesse ben so greuous and weighty for to suffre/ that he dare nat vndertake to do workes of goodnesse/ as saith sayut Gregorye.

Nowe cometh wanhope/that is despeyre of the mercy of god/ that cometh sometyme of to moche outrageous sorowe/ and sometyme of to moche drede/ ymaginynge ỹ he hath do so moche synne/that it wol nat auayle hym/ tho he wolde repent hym and forsake synne: thorough whiche despeyre or drede/ he abandoneth al his herte to euery maner synne/ as saithe sayut Augustyne. Whiche dampnable synne/if it contynewe vnto his ende/ it is called synnynge in the Holygoost.

This horryble synne is so perylous/ that he that is despeyred there ne no felony ne no syn that he douteth for to do/ as shewed well by Judas. Certes aboue al synnes than is this synne most displesant to Christ & most aduersarye. Sothly he that despeyreth hym is lyke to the cowarde champyon recreaunt/ that flyeth without nede. Alas alas/nedeles is he recreaunt/and nedelesse despayred. Certes the mercy of god is euer redy to the penytent person/and is aboue al his workes. Alas canne not a man bethynke hym on the gospell of sayut Luke. xv. Where as Christ sayethe/ that as well shal there be ioye in heuen vpon a synful man that dothe penytence/ as vpon foure score & nyneteene righteful men that nede no penytence. Loke further in the same gospel the ioy and the feste of the good man that had loste his sonne/when his sonne with repentaunce was returned to his father. Can they not remembre hem also/ that (as sayethe sayut Luke) Capi. xxiii. Howe that the theefe that was hanged besyde Jesu Christe/ sayde: Lorde remembre me/ when thou commest in to thy regne.

Jesu

Forsothe said Christ/ I saye to the: To daye shalte thou be with me in paradise. Certes/ there is no so horrible synne of man/ that he may in his lyfe be destroyed by penytence/ thorughe verture of the passion and of the deathe of Christ. Also what nede men thynke to be despayred/ sythe that his mercy is so redy and large? Axe and have. Than cometh sompnolence/ that is sluggy slombring/ whiche maketh a man heuy and dull in body & in soule/ and this synne cometh of slouthe: And certes the tyme that by waye of reason men shulde not slepe/ is by the more we/ but if there were cause resonable. For sothely the more we ydle is moste contrarie a man to say his prayers/ and for to thanke god/ & to honour god/ and to yeue almesse to the poore/ that cometh first in the name of Jesu Christ. Lo/ what sayth Salomon? who so wel by the more we awake to seke me/ he shal synde me. Than cometh negligence or retchelesnesse/ that reketh of nothyng. And though that ignorance be mother of al harmes/ certes negligence is the norice. Negligence ne dothe no force whan he shal do a thynge/ whether he do it well or yuell. The remedye of these two synnes is/ as sayethe the wyse man: That he that dredeth god sparyth not to do that he ought to do/ and he that loueth god he wol do diligence to plese god by his werkes/ and abandone hym selfe with al his myght wel for to do. Than cometh ydelnesse/ that is the pate of al harmes. An ydel man is lyke to a place yt hath no walles/ yt dyuel may entre on every syde/ & shote at hym that is discouert/ by temptacion on euery syde. This yelnesse is the thestruse of al wycked and vnclene thoughtes/ and of all vnhurt. Certes the heuy is prest to hery that wyll labourc/ and not to ydell folke. Also Dauid sayethe/ that they ne be not in the labourc of men/ ne they shal not be whypped with men/ that is to say in purgatorye. Certes than seemeth it they shal be tormented with the dyuels in hell/ but if they do penaunce.

Than cometh the synne that men call Tristice/ as whan a man is so sadered/ or sorye thoughte or he wol entre to gode: and certes that is a great folye. For in lyke wyse that sorowe the dyethe/ and wol not aryse. And this lyke cometh of false hope/ that he thynketh he shal lyue longe/ but that hope fayleth ful ofte.

Than cometh lachesse/ that is he that whan he begynneth any good worke/ anon he wol leue and flynte it/ as done they that haue ordayned person to gouerne/ and ne take of hym no more hede/ anon as they synde any contrary or any anoye. These ben the newe shepherdes/ that lete their shepe wittyngly go renne to the wolfe that is in the bierre/ or do not force of her owne gouernaunce. Of this cometh poverte and distruction bothe of spirituell and temporell thynges. Than cometh a maner coldenesse that freseth the hert of man. Than cometh Undeuotion/ through whiche a man is so blont/ and as saith sayut Bernard/ hath suche langour in his soule/ yt he may neyther rede ne synge in holy churche/ ne here ne thinke of no deuotyon/ ne traueyle with his honden to no good worke/ that it ups to him Insanery and al apalled. Than weyeth he slowe and slombry and soone wol be wrothe/ and soone is enclyned to hate and enuy. Than cometh the synne of worldly sorowe/ suche as is called Tristitia/ that sleeth a man/ as sayth sait Paule. For certes suche sorowe worketh the dethe of the soule and body also/ for therof cometh that a man is anoyed of his owne lyfe. Wherfore suche sorowe shoueth full ofte the lyfe of man/ er that his tyme is come by way of kynde.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

Ayenst this horrible synne of Accidie/ and the braunches of the same/ there is a vertue that is called Fortitudo or strength/ that is an affection/ throughe whiche a man despyseth anoyous thynges: This vertue is so mighty and so rygorous/ that it dare withstonde mightily/ and wisely kepe him selfe fro perylles that ben wicked/ and wrastell ayenst thassautes of yt dyuel/ for it enhaunceth & enforceth yt soule/ right as accidie abateth & maketh it feble: for this fortitude may endure hy sorowe/ sustenaunce the trauayles that ben couenable.

This

This vertue hath many speces/ ꝑ first is called Magnanimite/that is to say/gret corage. For certes there behoueth great corage ayenst accidie/ lest that it ne swalowe ꝑ soule by the synne of sorowe/ or distroye it by wanhope. Certes this vertue maketh folke vndertake harde and grenous thynges by her owne wyl wisely and resonably. And for as moche as the deuyl fighteth ayenst a man more by subtylte & sleyght than by strength/ therfore shall a man withstode hym by wytte/ reason/ and discretion. Than are there the vines of faithe and hope in god and in his sayntes/ to eschue and accomplisshe the good workes/ in ꝑ whiche he purposeth fermely to contynue. Than cometh sureme or sikernesse/and that is whan a man ne douteth no traueyle in tyme cõpynge/of the good workes that he hath begonne. Than cometh Magnyficence/ that is to saye/ whan a man dothe and ꝑformeth great workes of goodnesse that he hath begon/and that is thende why that men shulde do good workes. For in the accomplysshing of good workes/ lyeth the great guerdon. Than is there Constance/ that is stablenesse of corage/ and this shulde be in hert by stedfast faith/ and in mouthe/in beryng/in chere/and in dede. Also there ben mo spectal remedies ayenst accidie/ in dyuers workes: as in consyderation of the paynes of hel/the ioyes of heuen/ and in trust of the grace of the holygoost/ that wyl yeue him myght to performe his good entent.

¶ De Auaricia.

After Accidie wol I speke of Auarice/ and of couetise. Of whiche syn saint Poule saith:the rote of al harmes is couetise/ ad Timoth. vi. For sothly whan the hert of man is confounded in it selfe & troubled/and that the soule hath lost the cõfort of god/than sebeth he any ꝑdel solace of worldly thynges. Auarice/after the discription of sayni Augustyn/ is a lycorousnesse in hert to haue erthly thynges. Some other folke saye/ that auarice is for to purchace many erthely thynges/ and nothynge to yeue to hem that haue nede. And vnderstonde that auarice stondeth nat onely in londe ne catel/ but somtyme in scien and glorye/ & in euery manr of outrageous thynges in auarice. And couetise is ther. Couetise is for to coueit suche thynges ꝑ thou hast nat. And auarice is to withholde & kepe suche thynges as thou hast without right. Sothly this auarice is a synne that is ful damnable/ for al holy writ curseth it/ & speketh a yenst ꝑ vice/ for it dothe wrong to Jesu christ: for it taketh fro him the lone that men to him owe/ and tourneth it backewarde ayenst al reason/ and maketh that the auaricious man hath more hoope in his catell/ than in Jesu Christe/ and dothe more obseruaunce in kepyng of his treasour/ than he dothe in the seruyce of Jesu Christ. And therfore sayth saint Poule: ad Ephesios quinto: That an auaricious man is the thraldome of idolatrye. What differences is there betwyxt an ydolastre and an auaricyous man? But that an ydolastre-paraventure ne hath nat but a maumet or two/ & the auaricious man hath many. For certes euery florcyn in his coffre/ is his maumet. And certes the syn of maumetry is the first that god defended/ as in the .j. cõmaundement it beareth wytnesse/in Expodi. capi. xx. Thou shalte haue no false godes before me/ ne thou shalte make to the no graue thynge. Thus is an auaricious man/ that loueth his treasour before god/an ydolastre/ And through this cursed synne of auarice and Couetyse/ cometh these harde lordshippes/ through whiche they ben sirened by tyllages/ customes/ and carriages/ more than her duety or reason is/ or elles take they of her bondemen amerciamentes/ whiche might more resonably be called extorcions than merciamentes. Of whiche amerciamentes or raunsomynge of bondemen/ some lordes fleteraundes saye that it is rightful/ for as moche as a churle hath no temporell thynge/ that it ne is his lordes/ as they say. But certes these lordshippes do wrong/that bereue their bondemen thynges that they neuer yaue hem. Augustinus de Ciuitate dei. Libro. iv. Dothe vs wyte the condition of thraldom/ and the first cause of thraldome was for synne. Thus may ye se/that thoffence deserued thraldome/ but nat nature. Wherfore these lordes

ne sholde not moche glouisye hem in her sorde-
shyppe/ sythe that they by naturall condycion
ben not lordes ouer thralles/ but for that thral-
dom came furste by the deserte of synne. And
more ouer there as the lawe sayth/ that tem-
porall goodes of bonde folke ben the goodes
of her lorde: ye/ that is for to vnderstonde/
the goodes of the emperour/ to defende hem in
her right/ but not to robbe hem ne reue hem.
Therfore sayth Seneca: thy pudence shalde
vse benygnly with thy thralles. Those that
thou callest thy thralles/ ben godds people:
and for humble people ben Cristes frendes/
they ben cõtubernyall with the lordes. Thinke
also that of surhe sede as thoules spunge/ of
such sede spung lordes: as wel may the thoule
be saued as the lorde. The same dethe that ta-
keth the thoule/ suche dethe taketh the lorde.
Wherfore I rede do right so with the thoule as
thou woldest that thy lorde dyd with ỳ if thou
were in his plyght. Curry synful man is a
thoule to syn: I rede the lorde certes/ that thou
werke in suche wise with thy thoules/ that they
rather loue the than drede the. I wote well
that there is degree aboue degree/ as reson is/
and skyll is that man do her honoure there as
it is due: But certes extorcions and dispyte of
your vnderlynges is dampnable. And fer-
thermore vnderstonde wel/ that these conque-
rours or tyrannes make ful ofte thralles of
hem that ben borne of as royal blode as ben
they that hem conquere. Thes name of thral-
dom was neuer erst knowe/ tyl that Noe sayd
that his sonne Canaan shulde be thral to his
brethren for his synne. What say we than of
hem that pylle and do extorcions to holy chur-
che: certes the swerde that may pene furst to a
knight/ whan he is newe dubbed/ signyfyeth
that he shulde defende holy churche/ and not
robbe and pyll it/ and who so dothe he is trai-
tour to Cryst. And as sayth sayn Austyn/
they ben the dyuels woulues that strangle the
shepe of Jesu Crist/ a dome worse than woul-
wes/ for sothly whan the woulfe hath ful hes
wombe/ he styntith to strangle shepe: But soth
ly the pyllours and dystroyers of holy churche
goodes ne do not so/ for they ne stynte neuer to
pylle. Nowe as I haue sayde/ sythe so is that
synne was furst cause of thraldom/ than is it
thus/ that at the tyme that al this worlde was
in synne/ than was al this worlde in thraldom
and in subiection/ but certes sythe the tyme of
grace came/ god ordayned ỳ some folke shuld
be more hye in estate and in degre/ and some
folke more lowe/ and that eche shulde be ser-
ued in his astate. And therfore in some coun-
treys there they be thralles/ whan they haue
turned hem to the fayth/ they make her thral-
les free out of thraldom: and therfore certes
the lorde oweth to his man that ỳ man oweth
to the lorde. The pope calleth him selfe ser-
uaunt of the seruauntes of god/ but for as the
estate of holy churche ne myght not haue ben/
ne the comen profyte myght not haue be kept/
ne peace ne rest in erthe/ but if god had orday-
ned that some many had hyer degree/ and some
many lower: Therfore was soueraynte ordayn-
ned to kepe/ mayntayne/ and defende her vn-
derlynges and her subiectes in reason/ as fer-
forthe as it lyeth in her power/ and not to dis-
troy ne confounde hem. Wherfore I say/ that
those lordes that ben lyke wolues that deuour
the possessyons or the catell of poore folkes
wrongfully/ without mercy or mesure/ they
shal receyue by ỳ same mesure that they haue
mesured to poore folke/ the mesure of Jesu
Crist but it be amended. Nowe cometh dis-
cryte betwyxt marchaunt & marchaunt. And
thou shalt vnderstonde that marchaundyse is
in two maners/ that one is bodily/ and that
other is goostly: that one is honest and lesful/
and that other is dishonest and vnlesful.
The bodely marchaundyse that is lesful & ho-
nest is this: that there as god hath ordayned
that a reigne or a countraye is suffysaunt to
hem selfe/ than it is honeste and lesfull that of
habundaunce of this countrey/ menne helpe
an other countrey that is nedy: And therfore
there muste be marchauntes to bring fro one
countrey to that other her marchaundyse.
That other marchaundyse that men haun-
ten with fraude/ and trecherye/ and dyscryte/
with leasynges and false othes/ is right cur-
sed and dampnable. Espyritual marchaun-
dyse is properly Symonye/ that is entencyon
desyre to bye thynge any espyrituell/ that

is a

is thynge whiche apertayneth to the sayntuarye of god/ and to cure of the soule. This desyre if so be that a man do his dilygẽce to performe it/ al be it that his desyre ne take non effecte/ yet it is to hym a deedly synne/ and if he be ordred/ he is irreguler. Certes symony is called of Symon Magus/ that wolde haue bought for temporel catell the yefte that god had yeue by the holy goost to saint Peter and to the apostels: And therfore vnderstõde that he that selleth and he that byeth thynges espyrituels/ ben called Symonpakes/ be it by catel/ be it by procuryng or by flesshly prayer of his frendes/ flesshly frendes or espirituel frendes: flesshly in two maners/ as by kynred or other frendes: Nothly if they praye for hym that is not worthy and able/ it is symonye if he take the benefice/ and if he be worthy and able ther is none. That other maner is whan man or woman prayeth for lolke to auaũce hem only for wicked flesshly affection/ whiche they haue vnto the persons/ and that is foule symonye. But certes in seruyce/ for whiche men yeuen thinges espirytuel vnto her seruaũtes/ it muste be vnderstonde that the seruyce muste be honest/ or els not/ & also that it be without bargeyning/ and that the person be able. For as saythe saynt Damasen: Al the synnes of the worlde at regarde of this synne/ are as thyng of naught/ for it is ỳ greteste synne that may be after the synne of Lucifer & of Antichrist: For by this synne god forleseth ỳ churche and the soule whiche he bought with his precious bloode/ by hem that yeue churches to hem that ben not worthy/ for they put in theues hondes that steale the soules of Jesu Christ/ & distroy his patrimony. By suche vnworthy preestes and curates haue leude men lesse reuerence of the sacramẽtes of holy churche/ and suche yeuers of churches put ỳ children of Christ out/ and put i the churche the dyacles owy sonnes: they sell the soules that lambes shulde kepe to the wolfe whiche strangleth hem: and therfore shal they neuer haue parte of the pasture of lambes/ that is the blysse of heuen. Nowe cometh hasardrie with his apertenaunces/ as tables and rafles/ of whiche cometh discrete/ false othes/ chydynges/ & al rauynesse/ blasphemynges/ and vengynges of god/ and hate of his neyghbours/ waste of goodes/ mispendyng of tyme/ and somtyme manslaughter. Certes hasardours ne mowe not be without great synne. Of Auarice cometh also lefynges/ theft/ false wytnesse/ and false othes: and ye shal vnderstonde that these be grete synnes/ and expresse ayenst the cõmaundementes of god/ as I haue sayde. False wytnesse is in worde/ and also in dede: In worde as for to byreue thy neyghbours good name by thy false wytnesse/ or byreue hym his catel or his herytage/ by thy false wytnessing/ whan thou for yre or for mede/ or for enuye/ bearest false wytnesse/ or accusest hym/ or excusest thy self falsly. Ware ye questmongers and notaries: Certes for false wytnessynge was Susan in ful great sorowe & payn/ and many another mo. The syn of theefte is also expresse ayenst goddes heest/ & in two maners/ corporel & spirituel: the corporel theft is: As for to take thy neyghbours catell ayenst his wyl/ be it by force or by sleight/ be it by mette or by mesure: by sirkynge also of false endytementes vpon hym/ and in borowyng of thy neyghbours catell & entent neuer to pay it ayen/ & semblable thinges. Espyrituel theefte is sacrylege/ that is to say/ hurtyng of holy thynges sacred to Christ in two maners/ by reson of the holy place/ as churches or churche perdes: For whiche euery vilaynous synne that men don in suche places may be called sacrilege/ or euery violence in the semblable places. Also they that withdrawe falsely the rightes that longe to holy churche and plesyng. And generally sacrilege is to reue holy thing fro holy place/ or vnholy thinge out of holy place/ or holy thinge out of vnholy place.

¶ Relevatio contra peccatum Auaricie.

NOwe shal ye vnderstonde/ that releuing of auarice is misericorde and pyte largely taken. And men myght aske why that misericorde and pyte are releuyng of auarice: Certes the auaricious man sheweth no pyte ne misericorde to the nedeful

men/

man. For he delyteth hym in the keppynge of his treasure/ and nat in the reseruyng ne reskeppynge of his euyn cristen. And therfore speke I first of mysericorde. Thanne is mysericorde (as saithe the Philosopher) A vertue/ by whiche the corage of man is stered/ by the mysease of hym that is mysesed. Upon whiche mysericorde folowyth pite/ in persoumyng and fulfyllyng of charitable woikes of mercy/ kepeth and comforteth him that is mysesed. And certes these thynges moue and stere a man to mysericorde of Jesu Cristi/ that he gaue hym selfe for our offence/ & suffred dethe for mysericorde/ and forgaue vs our originall synnes/ and therby released vs fro the paynes of helle/ and myuysshed the paynes of purgatoire by penitence/ and yeueth grace wel to do/ and at laste the blysse of heuen. The speces of mysericorde ben for to lene/ and also for to yeue: for to forgeue and release/ & for to haue pite in herte and compassyon/ of the mischefe of his euyn cristen/ and also to chastyse there as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenst auarice/ is resonable largesse: but sothly here behoueth the consyderacion of þ grace of Jesu Cristi/ and of the temporel goodes/ and also of the goodes perdurable þ Jesu Cristi yaf to vs/ and to haue remembraunce of the dethe whiche he shal receyue/ the knoweth not whan where/ ne howe: and also that he shal forgo al that he hath/ saue onely that whiche he hath expended in good werkes.

But for as moche as some folke ben vnmesurable/ meruel ought for to auoyde and eschue folysshe largesse/ the whiche some people call waste.

Certes he that is foole large/ yeueth not his catell/ but he leseth his catell:

Sothly what thynge that he yeueth for vayneglorye/ as to mynstrels and to folke to beare his renome in the worlde/ he hath synne therof and nought almesse: Certes he leseth foule his good þ he ne seketh with the pete of his good nothing but synne. He is lyke to an horse that seketh rather to drinke drouy or troubled water than for to drinke water of the clere welle. So han appertenaunce the sayd curseyngs/ that Cristi shal yeue at the dayes of dome/ to hem that shal be dampned.

¶ Sequitur de Gula.

After Auarice cometh Glotony/ which is expresse ayenst the cõmaundement of god. Glotony is vnmesurable appetyte to ete or drinke/ or els to do ynough to the vnmesurable appetyte and disordeyned couetyse to eate or to drynke. This synne corrupteth al this worlde/ as wel shewed in the synne of Adam & of Eue. Loke also what saythe sayn Poule of glotenye. Many (saythe he) gone/ of whiche I haue often said to you/ and now I say it weppynge/ that ben the enemyes of the crosse of Cristi/ of whiche the ende is dethe/ and of whiche her wombe is her god and her glory/ in confusyon of hem that so deuour erthly thynges. He that is vsed to this synne of glotenye/ he ne maye no synne withstonde/ he must be in seruage of al vyces/ for it is the vyces hourde/ there he hydeth and resteth hym. This synne hath many speces: The firste is dronkenesse that is the horryble sepulture of mans reson: and therfore whan a man is dronke he hath lorne his reson: And this is deedly synne. But sothly whan that a man is not wonte to stronge drinke/ and paraunture ne knoweth not the strength of the drinke/ or hath febilesse in his heed/ or hath trauayled/ through whiche he drinketh the more/ al be he sodaynly caught with drinke/ it is no deedly synne/ but venyal. The seconde spece of glotenye is/ that the spyrite of a man wexeth all troubled/ for dronkennesse bereueth hym the discretion of his wytte.

The therde maner spece of glotonye is whan a man deuoureth his meate/ & hath not rightful maner of eetyng. The fourth is whan through the great abundaunce of his meete/ the humours in his body ben distempred. The fifth is forgetfulnesse by to moche drinkyng/ for whiche sometyme a man forgetteth er the morwyng what he dyd on the euenyng before.

By other maner ben distyncte the speces of glotenye after sayn Gregorie. The first is

for to eate before tyme to eate. The seconde is whan a man gyueth hym to delycate meate or drinke. The thirde is whan men take to moche ouer measure. The fourthe is curiosyte/ with great entent to make and apparayle his meate. The fyfthe is for to eate to gredely.

These ben ỹ fyue fyngers of the dyuels hõde/ by whiche he drawetḥ folke to synne.

¶ The remedy ayenst Glotony.

Ayenst glotony the remedy is abstynence/ as saithe Salyene: but that I holde nat meritorious/ if he do it for the heale of his body. Saynt Augustyne wolle that abstynence be done for vertue/ and with patience. Abstynence (saithe he) is lytel worthe/ but if a man haue good wyl therto/ and but if he be enforced by patience and charyte/ and that men do it for goddes sake/ as ỹ hope to haue the blysse of heuen. ¶ The felowes of abstynence be attemperaunce/ that holdeth the meane in all thynges. Also shame that eschewetḥ al dishonestie. Sufficiaunce that seketh no riche meates ne drinkes/ ne dothe nat force of outragious appareylyng of meate. Measure also/ that restreyneth by reason/ the vnmesurable appetyte of eatyng. Sobernesse also/ that restrayneth the outrage of drinke. Sparynge also/ that restrayneth the delycate ease to sytte longe at meate/ wherfore some folke stonden of her owne wyl whan they eete/ bycause they wol eate at lasse leyser.

¶ De Luxuria.

After Glotonye cometh Lecherye/ for these two synnes ben so nye cosyns/ that ofte tyme they wolle nat departe. God wote this synne is ful displesaunt to god/ for he said him selfe: do no lechery. And therfore he putteth great paynes ayenst this synne. For in the olde lawe/ if a woman thrall were take in this synne/ she shulde be beate with stanes to dethe. And if she were a gētylwoman she shulde be slayne with stones. And if she were a bysshops doughter/ she shulde be brent by goddes cōmaundement. ¶ Moreouer by the syn of lechery/ god drowned al the worlde and after that he brent fyue cytees with thonder and lightenyng/ and sanke hem in to hel.

Nowe lete vs speke than of the sayd synnyng synne of lechery/ that men cal auoutrye of wedded folke/ that is to saye/ if that one of hem be wedded or eke bothe.

Saynt Johan sayethe/ that auoutrers shalle in hell in a stacke brennynge of fyre and of brumstone for the stenche of her ordure: Certes the brellynge of this sacrament is an horryble thyng: It was made of god him selfe in paradyse/ and confermed by Jesu Chryst/ as wytnesseth saynt Mathewe in the gospell: A man shal leaue father and mother/ & take him to his wyfe/ and they shalbe two in one flesh.

This sacrament betokeneth the knyttynge togyther of Chryste and holy churche. And not onely that god forbade auoutrye in dede/ but also he cōmaunded that thou shuldest not couetye thy neyghbours wyfe. In thys sense sayethe saynt Augustyn is forboden al manr couetyse to do lecherye. Lo/ what sayth saynt Mathewe in the gospell/ that who so seth a woman to couetyse of his lust/ he hath done lecherye with her in his herte. Here may ye se that not onely the dede of this synne is forboden/ but also the desyre to that synne. This cursed synne anoyeth greuously hem that it haunte: and first to her soule/ for he obligeth it to synne and to payne of dethe/ whiche is perdurable. Vnto the body anoyeth it grieuously also/ for it dreth hym and wasteth/ and shentetḥ hym/ and of his bloode he maketh sacrifyce to the fende of hell: It wasteth hes catell and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foule thynge a man to waste his catell on women: yet it is a fouler thynge whan that for suche ordure women dispende vpon men her catell and her substaunce. This synne as seyth the Prophete/ taketh from man and women her good fame and her honour/ and it is ful delectable and pleasaunt to the dyuell. For therby wynneth he the more parte of this wretched worlde. And right as a marchaunt desyreth hym moste in that chaffare whiche he hath moste auauntage and profyte of/ right so delyteth the fende in this ordure.

The

This is that other honde of the dyuell/ with fyue fyngres/ to catche the people to his vylanye. The furst is the folysshe lokynge of the folysshe woman and of the folisshe man/ that sheth ryght as ꝑ Basiliscus or cokatrice sleeth folke by veryn of his syght: for the cokatrys of the eyen sole werth the cokatrys of the herte. The seconde fynger is the vilaynous touchyng in wicked maner. And therfore sayth Salomon: that who so toucheth and handeth a woman/ he fareth as that man that handeth the scorpion/ whiche styngeth and sodaynly sleeth through sorcerye/ or as who so that toucheth warme pytche blemysshyth his fyngers. The thirde is foule wordes/ whiche fareth fyre/ whiche ryght anon burneth the herte. The fourth fynger is the kyssyng: And truely he were a great foole that wolde kysse the mouthe of a burnyng ouen or of a fornays. And more fooles ben they that kysse in vilanye/ for that mouthe is the mouthe of hell/ and namely these olde dotardes hoseures/ whiche wol kysse and sporder/ and besy hem selfe thoughe they maye naught do. Lettes they ben lyke to houndes: for an hounde whan he cometh nygh to the roseres/ or by other benches/ thoughe so be that he maye not pysse/ yet wol he heue vp his legge and make a countenaunce to pysse. And for that many man weneth that he maye not synne for no spectaculesse that he dothe with his wyfe. Trusty that opynyon is falsse: God wote a man maye slee hym selfe with his owne wyfe/ and make hym selfe bonde of his owne tonne. Lettes be it wyfe/ be it chylde or any worldly thing/ that he loueth before god/ it is his mawmet/ and he is an ydolastre. A man shulde loue his wyfe by discrecyon/ soberly and attemperatly/ and than is she as though it were his sister. The fyfthe fynger of the dyuels honde is the flyenge bebe of lechetye. Truely the fyue fyngers of glotonye the dyuel putteth in to the wombe of a man: And with his fyue fyngers of lechetye he gripeth hym by the eyen/ for to drawe hym in to the fournaye of helle/ there as they shall haue the fyre and the wormes that euer shal laste/ and wepyng and waylynge/ and sherpe hungre & thurste/ grymmesse of dyuels/ whiche shal al to rende hem without ony ende. Of lechetye as I sayd soundeth and springeth dyuers speces: As for nateryon/ that is bytwene man and woman whoche be not maryed/ and is deedly synne/ and ayenst nature: Al that is enemye and destruction to nature is ayenst nature. Perfay the reason of a man telleth hym wel also that it is deedly synne/ for as moch as god forbade lecherye. And sayntꝰ Poule peeth hem the regne that nyse dewe to no wight but to hem that done deedly synne. Another synne of lechery is to bryeue a maydes maydenhede/ for he that so dothe/ certes he casteth a mayden out of the fyrst degre that is in this presente lyfe/ and byreueth her that precious fruite that the holy calleth the hundred fruites/ I ne can saye it none other wyse in Englysshe/ but in latyn it hyght (Centesimus fructus) Certes he that so dothe is cause of many damages and vilanyes/ mo than any man can telle: right as he is cause of many domages sometyme that beestes do in the felde/ that breke the hedge or the closure/ through whiche he destroyeth that maye not be restored: For certes no more maye maydenhede be restored than any arme that is smytte fro the body maye retourne ayen and wexe: She maye haue mercy/ this wote I wel/ if that she haue wyll to do penitence/ but neuer shal it be that she nas corrupte. And al be it so that I haue spoke somwhat of auoutry/ also it is good to shewe the perylles that longe to auoutrye/ for to eschewe that foule synne. Auoutrye in latyn is for to saye/ approchyng of an other mannes bedde/ throughe whiche those that sometyme were one flesshe/ abandone her bodyes to other persones. Of this synne as sayth the wyse man folowe many harmes: First breakyng of fayth/ and certes in fayth is the keye of chrystendome: and whan that fayth is broke and lorne/ forthy chrystendom stant bareyne and without fruite. Also synne is also theefte/ for theefte generally is to reue a wyght his thynge ayenst his wyll. Lettes this is the foulest theefte that may be/ whan that a woman steleth

leth her body fro her husbonde and yeueth it to her holour to defoyle her; and stealeth her soule fro Ihusu/ and yeueth it to the dyuell: This is a fouler theste than for to breake a churche and steale away the chalyce/ for these auouterers breke the temple of god spyrituelly/ and steale the vessell of grace/ that is the body and the soule: For whiche Ihusu shall distroye hem/ as sayth saynt Poule. Sothly of this theste doubted greatly Joseph/ whan that his lordes wyfe prayed hym of vylanye/ whan he sayde: Lo my lady howe my lorde hath take to me vnder my warde/ al that he hath in this worlde/ ne nothynge of his thynges is out of my power/ but onely ye that be his wyfe: and howe shulde I than do this wickednesse and synne so horrible ayēst god/ and ayenst my lorde/ god it forbede. Alas/ al to lytel is suche trouthe nowe founde. The thirde harme is the fylth/ through whiche they breake the cōmaundement of god/ and defoyle the auter of matrimonye/ that is Ihusu. For certes in so moche as the sacrament of maryage is so noble and so digne/ so moche is it greater synne for to breake it: For god made mariage in paradyse in the estate of innocencie/ to multyplye mankynde in the seruyce of god/ and therfore is the brekynge therof the more greuous/ of whiche brekyng come false heyres ofte tyme/ that wrōgfully occupye folkes heritages/ and therfore wol Ihusu put hem out of the reigne of heuen/ that is heritage to good folke. Of this brekyng cometh also ofte tyme that folke vnware wedde or synne with her owne kynrede: and namely these harlottes that haunte bordels of these foule women/ that maye be lykened to a comune gonge/ where as men pourge her ordure. What saye we also of putours/ that lyue by the horryble synne of putrie/ and constreyne women to yeue to hem a certayne rent of her bodily puterie/ ye somtyme of his owne wyfe or his childe/ as done these baudes: Certes these ben cursed synnes. Vnderstode also that auoutrye is sette gladly in the ten commaundementes bytwene theft a manslaughter/ for it is the greatest theste that maye be/ for it is theste of body and of soule/ and it is lyke to homicide for it breketh a two a bren a two hem that first were made of one flesshe. And therfore by þ olde lawe of god they shulde be slayne/ but natheles by the lawe of Ihesu Ihusu/ that is lawe of pyte/ whan he sayd to the woman that was soude in auoutrye/ and shulde haue be slayne with stones after the wyl of the iewes/ as was her lawe: Go sayd Jesu Ihusu/ and haue no more wyll to do synne. Sothly the vengeaunce of auoutrye is awarded to the paynes of hell/ but if so be that it be disfourbed by penitence. Yet ben there mo speces of this cursed synne/ as whan that one of hem is religyous or els bothe/ or of folke that ben entred in to ordre/ as subdeakon/ deakon/ or preest/ or hospitaliers. And euer the hyer that he is in ordre/ the greater is the synne. The thynges that greatly agreggen her synne is the brekyng of her auowe of chastyte whan they receyued the order. And mar ouer sothe is that holy order is chefe of al the tresoure of god and his especial signe a marke of chastyte/ to shewe that they ben ioyned to chastyte/ whiche is the most precious lyfe that is: and these ordred folke ben specially tytled to god and of the specyal meyne of god/ for whiche whan they done deedly synne they ben the traytours of god a of his people/ for they lyue of the people. Preestes ben aungels as by the dignyte of her mistere/ but forsothe saynt Poule sayth that Sathanas transformeth hym in an aungell of lyght. Sothly the preest that haunteth deedly synne he maye be lykened to the aungell of derknesse/ transfourmed in the angell of lyght/ he semeth angel of lyght/ but forsoth he is angell of derknesse. Suche preestes be the sonnes of Holy/ as sheweth in the booke of Iuges/ that they were the sonnes of Beliall/ that is the dyuel. Beliall is to saye without ioge/ and so fare they/ hem thynketh they be free and haue no ioge/ no more than hath a free bulle that taketh whiche cowe that hym lyketh in the towne. So fare they by women/ for right as out fro bulle is yrought for al a towne/ right so is a wicked preest corruption yrought for al a pa-

rysshe

ryffte/or for al a countrey. These preestes/as sayth the boke/ne can not many/the myschyefe of preesthode to the people/ne they them selfe not good/they ne shal be hem self spared/as sayde the boke/of foolen preesthe that maketh hem office/but they take vyolence the preesthe that was trewe. Certes/so these preestes ne spare hem self of noon vnclennesse/that they ne make the people fouler hem in great reuerence/but they muste have verray preesthe of holynesse wyues and her doughters/and restreyne these women that consent to her horlotrye don great wrongs to Ihesu and to holy churche/al halowes/and al soules/for they office of these hem that sholde worshyp Ihesu & holy churche/and pleye for christen soules/and therfore have suche preestes and her lemmanes also that consent to her lechery/the enfruyt of al the courte temporel/tyl they come to amendement. The thirde spece of auoutrye is sometyme betwyxt a man and his wyfe/and that is whan they take no regarde in her assemblynge/but onely to her fleshly delyte/as sayth sayntt Jerome/and ne recken of nothyng but that they ben assembled bycause they ben maryed/al is good ynough/as they thynke: but in suche falle hath the deuel power/as sayd the angel Raphael to Thobie/for in her assemblyng they put Jesu Ihesu out of her herte/and yeue hem self to al ordure. The fourthe spece is the assemble of hem that ben of one affynyte/or ellis of hem/with whome her fadres or her kynred have dealed in the synne of lechery: This synne maketh hem lyke to hounder/that take no kepe to kynde. And eche parelle is in two maneres/either goost ly or fleshly: goostly as for to deale with the godsybbe/for right so as he that vyolateth a childe in the fleshly fadres/right so is the goostly fadres/right so is the godsybbe/than with her owne fleshly brother. The fyfth spece is that abhominable synne/of whiche abhominable syn no man ought speke ne write/nathelesse it is openly reherced in holy writ. This cursed synne doth man & woman in dyuerse maner: But though that holy writte speke of fourthe synne/eche holy writ may not be de fyled/no more than the sonne that shyneth on the dongehyll. The other synne apertayneth to lechery that cometh slepyng/and this synne cometh often to hem that ben mayden: and also to hem that be corrupt/and this syn may cal Pollucion/that cometh of thre maneres: Sometyme of langwissheyng of body/for the humours ben to rancke and habundant in the body of man/sometyme of vnclennesse/for fe blenesse of the vertue retentyfe/as philosophe maketh mencion: Sometyme for surfet of meate and dronke/& sometyme of vilaynous thoughtes that ben enclosed in mannes mynde whan he gothe to slepe/whiche may not be without synne/for whiche men must kepe hem wyselyl or elis may man synne ful grenously.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie.

Nowe cometh the remedy ayenst lecherye/and that is generally chastyte and continence that refrayne al dissolute meuynges that come of fleshly talentes. And euer the greater meryte shal he have that more refreyneth the wicked chaufynges of the ardour of this synne/and this is in two maneres: That is to saye/chastyte in maryage/and chastyte in wydowehede. Nowe shalt thou vnderstonde that matrimony is lefful assemblyng of man and woman that entreyne by vertue of the sacrament/the bonde throughe whiche they may not be departed in al her lyfe/that is to say/whyle that they lyue both. This/as saith the boke/is a ful great sacrament/god made it as I have sayd in paradyse/& wolde him self be borne in maryage: & for to halowe maryage he was at a wedding/where as he turned water in to wyne/whiche was the firste myracle that he wrought in erthe before his disciples. Lo the effects of maryage clenseth fornycacion and replenissheth holy churche of good lynage/for that is the ende of maryage/& thorughout holy synne is to vertuel synne/by cause how that hem wedded/and maketh the herte as one of

hem that hem wedded/ as wel as the bodies.

Dery mariage was estabysshed by god/ er that synne began/ whan naturall lawe was in his ryght poynt in Paradyse. And it was ordayned that oo man shulde haue but o woman/ and o woman but o man/ as saith saint Augustyne/ by many reasons.

First for mariage is figured betwyxt Crist and holy churche.

Another is for a man is heed of a woman/ alwaye by ordynaunce it shulde be so. For if a woman hadde mo men than one/ than shulde she haue mo heedes than one/ and that were a right horryble syght before god/ and also a woman myght nat please so many for be atones: and also there shulde neuer be rest ne quyete amonge hem/ for eche of hem wolde aske her owne right. And furthermore/ no man shulde knowe his owne engendure/ ne who shuld haue his herytage/ and the woman shulde be the lesse beloued.

Nowe cometh how that a man shulde bere him with his wyfe/ and namely in two thynges: that is to saye/ in sufferaunce and reuerence/ as shewed Crist whan he first made woman. For he ne made her of the heed of Adam/ for she shulde nat claym to great lordshippe/ for there as the woman hath the maystrye/ she maketh to moche baraunce/ there nede no mo ensamples of this/ the experiēce al day/ ought ynough suffice.

Also certes/ god ne made nat woman of the foote of Adame/ for she shulde nat be holde to lowe/ for she can nat pacyently suffre: but god made woman of the rybbe of Adam/ for woman shulde be felowe vnto man.

Man shulde beare him to his wyfe in faith/ in trouth/ and in loue (as saith saint Poule) that a man shulde loue his wyfe/ as Crist loueth holy churche/ that loued it so wel that he dyed for it: so shulde a man for his wyfe/ if it were nede. ¶ Nowe howe that a woman shulde be subiecte to her husbōde: that telleth saynt Peter/ first in obedience. And also as saith the Decree: A woman that is a wife/ as long as she is a wyfe/ she hath none auctorite to swere ne beare wytnesse/ without leaue of her husbonde / is her lorde/ alwaye he shulde be so by reason. She shulde also serue him of honeste/ and be attemperate of her array.

I wot wel that they shulde sel her clothes to please her husbondes/ but nat by queyntise of her array. Saint Jerom saith: wymmen that be apparelled in sylke & precious purple/ ne may nat clothe hem in Jesu crist. Saint Gregori saith also: that no wight seketh precious aray but onely for vayneglorye to be honoured the more of the people. It is a great folye a woman to haue great array outwarde/ & in her self be foule inwarde. A wyfe shulde also be mesurable in lokyng/ in bearyng/ & in langwyng/ and discrete in al her wordes & her dedes/ and about al worldely thynges she shuld loue her husbonde with al her herte/ and to him be true of her body: So shulde an husbonde be to his wyfe: For sythe that al the body is the husbondes/ so shulde her herte be/ or elles there is betwyxte hem two/ as in that no perfyte mariage. Than shal men vnderstonde that for thre thynges a man & his wyfe fleshly may assemble. The first is for the ententē of engendure of children to the scripture of god; for certes that is the cause fynal of matrimonye. Another cause is to yelde eche of hem to other the dettes of her bodyes/ for neyther of hem hath power ouer her owne bodies. The thirde is for to eschue lechery & vilanye. The fourth is for sothe deedly synne. As to the first is merytorie: the seconde also/ for as sayth the decre/ ỳ she hath merryte of chastyte that yeldeth to her husbōde the dette of her body/ ye though it be a yenst her lykyng & the lust of her herte. The thirde manner is venyall synne/ and truely scarsly may any of these be without venyal synne for the corrupcion & for the delyte. The fourthe manner is for to vnderstōde/ if they assemble only for amorous loue/ & for none of the forsayde causes/ but for to accomplysshe the brennyng delyte/ they erre not how oft/ sothly it is but a dedly syn: and thet with sorowe some folke wol paynethem more to do thā to her appetyte sufficeth. ¶ The seconde manner of chastyte is for to be a clene wydowe & eschewe the embracynges of a man/ and despyse the embracyng of

Jesu

Jesu Christ: These ben those that have ben wyues/ and haue forgate her husbondes/ and also women that haue done lecherye/ & ben returned by penaunce. And certes if that a wyfe myght kepe her of chaste by syence of her husbonde/ so that she neuer none occasion that hir offende/ it were to her a great merite. The maner of woman that obserueth chastite in clothyng and in countenaunce/ absteyneth in eatyng and drinkyng in spekynge & in dede/ she is the vessel of the hope of the blessed thaumaturge that fulfylleth holy churche of good odoure. The thirde maner of chastite is virginite/ and it behoueth that she be holy in herte/ and clene of body/ than is she spouse of Jesu Christ/ and she is the lyfe of aungels: she is the prayse of this worlde/ and she is as these martyrs ben regarde: She hath in her that tonge may not tell ne herte thynke. Virginite bare our lorde Jesu Christ/ and Virginite was hym selfe.

¶ Another remedy ayenst lecherye is specially to withdraw we suche thynges as yeue occasyon to that vyleynye: as ease/ eatynge/ and dronkynge: For certes whan the potte boyleth strongly/ the beste remedy is to withdraw we the fyre. Slepynge longe in great quyete is also a great nourrye to lecherye.

¶ Another remedy ayenst lechery is that a man or a woman eschewe the compayne of hem by whiche he douteth to be tempted: For al be it so that the dede be withstonde/ yet is there great temptacyon. Bothely a whyte walle/ all thoughe it ne brenne not fully by stirynge of the candell/ yet is the wall blacke of the fleme. Full ofte tyme I rede that no man truste in his owne persone/ but he be stronger than Sampson/ or holyer than Dauyd/ or wyser than Salomon.

Now after that I haue declared you as I canne/ the seuyn deedly synnes/ and some of her braunches/ with her remedies. Bothely if I coude/ I wolde tel you the tenne comaundements/ but for the doctryne I putte to dyuynyte. Nathelesse I hope to god they ben touched in this tretyse ende of hem.

¶ Sequitur secunda pars penitencie.

Now for asmuch as the seconde parte of penytence stonde in confessyon of mouthe/ of the whyche we haue to speke/ I say that confessyon is euery worde & euery dede/ that man commyte ayenst the lawe of Jesu Crist/ and this is for to synne in herte/ in worde/ and in dede/ by the fyue wyttes/ whiche ben sight/ herynge/ smellynge/ tastynge or sauoure/ and touchynge. Now we is it good to vnderstonde/ that that aggregeth moste euery synne. Thou shalt consider what thou arte that doste the synne/ whether thou be male or female/ yonge or olde/ gentyl or thral/ free or seruaunt/ halt or syke/ wedded or syngle/ ordred or vnordred/ wyse or fole/ clerke or secular/ if she be of thy kynrede bodily or gostly/ or no/ if any of thy kynrede haue synned with her or no/ & many mo thynges. Another circumstaunce is this/ whether it be done in fornycacion or in auoutry or no/ in manor of homycede or no/ horrible great synnes or smal/ and how long thou haste ben synned in synne. The thirde circumstaunce is the place there thou haste done synne/ whether in other mennes houses or in thyne owne/ in feldе/ in churche or in churchyarde/ in churche dedicate or no. For if the churche be hasted and maner or woman synneth in vnclene place by wayes of synne or wycked temptacion/ the churche is enterdited/ and the preest that dyd suche a dedayn/ the terme of al his lyfe he shulde no more synge masse. and if he dyd/ he shulde do deedly synne at euery tyme that he so longe masse. The fourth circumstaunce is/ by whiche medyatours or by whiche messangers/ or for enticement/ or for consentement to beare company with felowshippe. For many a wretche for to beare company/ wol go to the devell of hell. Wherfore they that egge or consent to the synne/ ben partenere of the synne/ and of the temptacion of the synner. The fyfth circumstaunce is how many tymes that he hath synned/ if it be in his mynde/ & how ofte he hath fallen. For he that ofte falleth in syn/ he displeseth the mercy of god and encreseth his syn/ and is vnbuxome to Christ.

to Chriſte / and he weyeth the mas feble to withſtonde ſynne / and ſynneth the more ſighte ly and the later ryſeth / and is more ſlowe to ſhryue hym / and namely to hym that is his confeſſour. For whiche that folke whan they ſal aryſe to ther olde folyes / either they leaue ther olde confeſſour / or elſe they departe her ſhrifte in dyuers partes. But ſothly ſuche departed ſhrifte deſerueth no mercy of god for her ſynnes. The ſyxte circumſtaunce is / why that a man ſynneth as by temptation: and if hym ſelfe procure that temptation / or by the eyeſyng of other folke / or if he ſynne with a woman by force or by her aſſent / or if ꝑ woman maugre her heed haue be a forced or none.

This ſhal she tel / whether it were for couetyſe or pouerte / or if it were by her procurement or no / and ſuche other thynges. The ſeuenth circumſtaunce is / in what maner he hath do his ſynne / or howe that she hath ſuffred that folke haue do to her. And the ſame ſhal the man tel playnly with al the circumſtaunces. & whether he hath ſynned with cõmen bordel womã or none / or done his ſynne in holy tymes or none / in faſtynge tyme or none / or before his ſhrift or after his later ſhrifte / and hath paraduenture broke therby his penaunce enioyned / by whoſe helpe or whoſe counſaile / by ſorcery or craft / al muſt be tolde / & al theſe thynges after as they be gret or ſmale / and grudge the cõſcience of man or woman. And eke ꝑ preeſt that is thy iuge / maye the better be auyſed of his ingement in yeuing of penaunce / & that is after thy contrition. For vnderſtonde wel that after tyme that a man hath defoyled his baptyme by ſynne / if he wol cõe to ſaluation there is non other way but by penaũce / ſhrift / and ſatiſfactyon / and namely by the two / if there be a confeſſour to whom he may ſhryue hym / and the thirde if he haue lyſe to perfourme it. Than ſhal a man loke and conſyder / that if he wol make a trewe and a profitable confeſſion / there muſte be four condytions.

Firſt it muſt be in ſorouſulneſſe of hert / as ſaith the kyng Ezechiel to god / I wol remẽbre me al the yeres of my lyfe in bytternesſe of my herte. This condytion of bytternesſe hath fyue ſignes. The firſt is / that cõfeſſion muſte be ſhamefaſt / nat for to couer ne hyde her ſynne / for he hath offended his ſouuerayne god and defoyled his ſoule. And herof ſaith ſaint Auguſtyn: The hert trauayleth for ſhame of his ſynne / & for he hath great ſhame aſhamed he is worthy to haue great mercy of god / whan he taas the confeſſion of the Publycan / that wolde nat heaue vp his eyen to heuen for he had offended god of heuen: for whiche ſhamefaſtneſſe he had anon the mercy of god. And therof ſaith ſayut Auguſtyn: that ſuche ſhameful folke be next forgyuenesſſe and mercy.

Another ſigne is humilyte in confeſſion / of whiche ſaith ſayut Peter: Humbleth you vnder the might of god: the houde of god is ſigne in confeſſion / for therby god forgyueth the thy ſynnes / for he alone hath the power. And this humilyte ſhal be in herte / & in outwarde ſignes: For right as he hath humilyte to god in his hert / right ſo ſhulde he humble his body outwarde to the preeſt / that ſytteth in goddes ſtede. For whiche in no maner / ſithe that Chriſt is ſouerayne / and the preeſt meane and mediatour betwyxt Chriſt and ꝑ ſynner / and the ſynner is ſaſte by waye of reaſon. Thou ſhulde nat the ſynner ſytte as hye as his confeſſour but knele before hym or at his fete / but if ſickeneſſe cauſe it: For he ſhal nat take hede who ſytteth there / but in whoſe place he ſytteth. A man that hath treſpaſſed to a lorde / and cometh to aſke mercy and make his accorde / & ſytteth hym downe by hym / men wolde holde hym outrageous and nat worthy ſoone for to haue remiſſyon of his treſpace.

The thirde ſigne is / howe thy ſhrifte ſhulde be ful of teares if thou maye / & if thou may nat wepe with thy bodely eyen / than wepe in thyne herte / whiche was the confeſſion of ſaint Peter. For after that he hadde forſake Jeſu Chriſt / he went out and wepte ful bytterly.

The fourthe ſigne is / that thou ne lette nat for ſhame to ſhewe thy cõfeſſion: Suche was the confeſſion of Magdaleyn / that ne ſpared for no ſhame of hem that were at the feeſt / to go to our lorde Jeſu chriſt & beknowe vr to him her ſynnes. The fyfth ſigne is / that a man

or if

or a woman be obeysaunt to receyue the penaunce that hym is enioyned. For certes Jesu Christ/ for the offences of man was obedient to dethe. The seconde condition of very confession is/ that it be hastely done. For certes/ yf a man had a deedly wounde/ euer the lenger that he taryeth to heale hym self/ the more wolde it corrupt and haste hym to his dethe/ & also the woūde wolde be the worse for to hele. And right so fareth synne/ that longe tyme is in a man vnshewed. Certes a man ought hastely shewe his synnes for many causes/ as for drede of dethe/ that cometh ofte sodaynly/ and no certayne what tyme it shall be/ ne in what place/ and also the drenchynge of o syn dia with in another: and also the lenger that he tareth the farther he is fro Christ. And yf he abyde to his laste daye/ scarsely maye he shryue hym or remembre hym of his synnes/ or repent for ꝑ grenous maladp of his dethe. And for aſmoche as he ne hath in his syse her bend Jesu Christe whan he hath spoken/ he shal crye to Jesu Christ at his laste day/ and scarcely wol he herken hym. And vnderstode that this condition must haue four thynges.

Thy shrifte must be prouyded before and a vysed/ for wicked haste dothe no profyte/ yf a man shunne hym of his synnes: be it of Pride/ or enuy/ and so forthe with the speces and circumstaunces of synne. And that he haue cōprehended in his mynde the nombre & greatnesse of his synnes/ and howe longe he hath syen in synne. And also that he hath be constrit for his synnes/ and in stedfaste purpose (by ꝑ grace of god) neuer ayen to fal to syn. And also that he drede and counterwaite hym selfe that he shye the occasion of synne/ to whiche he is enclyned. Also thou shalte shunne the of al thy synnes to o man/ and nat parte to o man and parte to another/ That is to vnderstande/ in entent to departe thy confession for shame or drede/ for it is but strangelyng of thy soule. For certes Jesu Christe is entierly al good/ in hym nys none imperfection/ & therfore either he forgeueth al perfitely/ or ellis neuer a deale. I saye nat that yf thou be assigned to thy penytencer for certayne syn that thou arte holde to shewe hym al ꝑ remenaūt of thy synnes/ of whiche thou hast be shryuen of thy curate/ but yf it lyke to the of thy humilyte/ this is no parte of thy shrifte. Ne I saye nat there as I spekē of diuysion of cōfession/ that yf thou haue lycence to shryue the to a discrete and an honest preest where the lyketh/ & by lycence of thy curate/ that thou ne mayest wel shryue the to hym of al thy synnes/ Lette no synne be vntolde as ferre as thou hast remembraunce. And whan thou shalte be shriuen to thy curat/ tel hym al thy synnes ꝑ thou hast do sithe thou were last shryuen. This is no wicked entent of diuysion of shrifte.

Also the very shrifte asketh certayne conditions. First that thou shryue the by thy free wyl/ nat constrayned for shame of folke/ sickenesse/ ne suche other thynges. For it is treason/ that he ꝑ trespaceth by his free wyl/ that by his free wyl he confesse his trespace/ and that none other man tel his syn but hymself/ ne he shal nat nay ne deny his syn/ ne wrathe hym ayenst the preest for amonesshing him to leaue his synne. The seconde condytion is/ that thy shrifte be lowful/ that is to saye/ that thou shunest the. And also the preest that heareth thy cōfession be verily in the sayth of holy churche/ and that a man ne be not dispeyred of the mercy of Jesu chryst/ as Cayn or Judas. And also a man must accuse hym selfe of his owyn trespace & not another/ but he shal blame and wyte hym selfe & his owne malyce of his synne/ & none other: But natheles yf that a nother man be occasion or entycer of his syn/ or the estate of a person be suche by whiche his synne is agredged/ or elis ꝑ he may not plainly shryue hym but he tell the person with whiche he hath synned/ than may he tel/ so that his entent ne be not to backbyte the person/ but only to declare his confession. Thou ne shalt not also make no leasynges in thy confession for humylyte/ paraventure to say that thou haste compysed and done suche synnes as of whiche that thou ne were neuer guylty. For sayut Augustyn sayth/ yf that thou vncause of thyn humylite makest lesynges on thy selfe/ though thou were not in synne before/ yet arte thou than

than in synne through thy leasynge. Thou must also shewe thy synne by thyne owne proper mouth/ but thou be dombe and nat by no letter: For thou that hast done the syn/ shalte haue the shame therfore. Thou shalt nat ete paynt thy confessyon by sayre subtell wordes/to couer the more thy synne: for than begylest thou thy selfe and nat the preest/ thou must tel it playne/ be it neuer so foule ne horrybie. Thou shalte also shryue the to a preest/ that is discrete to counsaile the/ and also thou shalte nat shryue the for vayneglory/ne for ypocrisy/ ne for no cause but onely for the loue & feare of Jesu Christ/ and heale of thy soule. Thou shalte nat also rey to the preest sodaynly to tel him lightly thy synne/as who saithe/ to tel a iape or a tale/ but auisedly and with good deuotion: And generally shryue the ofte & thou ofte fal ofte arise by confessyon. And though thou shryue the ofter than ones of the synne whiche thou hast be shryuen of/ it is the more merite. And as saith saynt Augustyne/ thou shalte haue ꝑ more lightly forgeuenesse and grace of god/ bothe of synne & payne. And certes ones a yere at leest/ it is lauful to be housled/ for surely ones a yere al thynges renouellen. ¶ Nowe haue I tolde you of be ry confessyon/ that is the.ii.yte of penytence.

¶ Explicit secūda pars penitentie:
Et sequitur tertia pars.

The thirde parte of penytence is satysfaction/and that stont most generally in almesse dede and bodily payne. Nowe ben there thre maner of almesse. Contrition of hert/ where a man offreth hym selfe to god.

Another is/ to haue pytie of defaute of his neighboure. And the thirde is in gyueng of good counsayle/goostly and bodily where as men haue nede/ and namely in sustenaunce of mens sode. And take kepe ꝑ a man hath nede of these thing! generally/he hath nede of sode of clothyng/and of herborowe: He hath nede of charitable counsaile/Visityng in pusony/ in sickenesse/and sepulture of his body. And if thou mayst nat visite the nedeful in thy persone/ visite hem with thy messagers & pestes.

These ben generally the almesse & workes of charite/ of hem that haue temporal richesse or discretion in counsaylyng. Of these workes shalte thou here at the daye of dome.

These almesses shalt thou do of thyn owne proper thynges/ and hastely & prively if thou mayst: But natheles/ if thou mayst nat do it prively/ thou shalte nat forbeare to do almesse though men se it/so that it be nat do for thanke of the worlde/ but onely for thanke of Jesu christ. For as witnesseth saynt Mathue Cap. v. A cyte maye nat be hydde that is set on a mountayne/ ne men lyght nat a lantern to putte it vnder a busshel/ but sette it vpon a candelstycke to yeue light to men in the house.

Right so shul your lyght/ light before men/ that they may se your good workes/ and glorifye our father that is in heuen.

Nowe is to speke of bodily payne/it stonte in prayers/waspng/fastynge/vertuous trayning of orisons. And ye shal vnderstonde/ that orisons or prayers/ is to saye/ a pytous wyl of herte/that setteth it in god/and expresseth by worde out warde to remeue harmes & to haue thinges spirituel and durable/ & sometyme temporal thynges. Of whiche orisons certes in the orison of the Pater noster: hath Jesu Christ enclosed moost thynges. Certes it is prouileged of thre thynges in his dignyte/ for which it is more digne than any other prayer/for that Jesu christ him selfe made it/and it is shorte/for it shulde be lerned ꝑ more lightly/and to holde it the more easy in hert/ & help him selfe the ofter with that orison: And for a man shulde be the lesse wery to saye it/ & nat excuse him to lerne it/ it is so shorte and easy: and for it cõprehendeth in it selfe al good prayers. The exposition of this holy prayer that is so excellent and digne/ I referre to the maysters of theology/ saue thus moche wol I say that whan thou prayest/ that god shulde forgeue the thyne offences/ as thou forgeuest hem that haue offended the: Be wele ware that thou be nat out of charite. This holy orison amplyfyeth also venyal synne/ and therfor it appertayneth specially to penytence.

The

This prayer must be truely said and in parfyte faith/ and that men pray to god ordynatlye/ discretely/ and deuoutly/ and alwaye a man shal put his wyl to be subiecte to ꝑ wyl of god. This oraison must also be sayd with great humblenesse and full pure and honestly/ and nat to the anoyaunce of any man or woman/ It muste also be contynewed with the workes of charite. It auayleth also ayenst the vices of the soule: For as saith saynt Jerome: By fastyng ben saued the vices of the flesshe/ and by prayer the vices of the soule.

After this thou shalte vnderstonde/ that bodily prayer stont in thre thynges: In forberyng of bodily meate and drinke/ in forberyng of worldly iolyte/ and in forberynge of deedly syn: this is to saye/ that a man shal kepe him fro deedly synne with al his myght.

And thou shalte vnderstonde also/ that god ordayned fastynge/ and to fastynge partayneth four thynges. Largenesse to poore folke Gladnesse of hert spirituel: nat to be angrye ne anoyed/ ne grutche for he fasteth/ and also resonable hour to eate by measure/ that is to saye/ a man shal nat eate in vntyme/ ne sitte the longer at the table for he fasteth.

Than shalte thou vnderstonde/ that bodily payne stonte in disciplyne or techyng by worde or wutynge/ or by ensample. Also in wearyng of heer or stampyn/ or of habergeons on her naked flesshe for Ihusles sake/ and that suche maner penaunces/ ne make nat thyne herte bytter or angrye/ ne anoyed of thy selfe/ for better is to caste awaye thyne heer/ than to caste awaye the swetnesse of Jesu Ihust. And therfore saithe saynt Poule: Clothe you/ as they that ben chosen of god in hert/ of mysericorde/ debonairte/ sufferaunce/ and suche maner of clothyng/ of whiche Jesu ihust is more pleased/ than with heeres or habergeons.

Than is discyplyne also in knocking of thy breste/ in scourgyng with rodden/ in knelyng/ in tribulation/ in sufferynge patiently wronges that ben do to the/ & also in patient sufferynge of sickenesse/ or lesynge of worldly goodes or catel/ or wyfe/ chylde/ or other frendes.

Than shalt thou vnderstonde whiche thynges distourbe penaunce/ and that is in foure maners/ drede/ shame/ hope/ and wanhope/ that is disperation. And for to speke first of drede for whiche he weneth that he maye suffre no penaunce. There ayenst is remedye for to thynke that bodily penaunce is but shorte and lytel/ at regarde of the payne of hell that is so cruell & so longe/ that it lasteth without ende.

Now ayenst the shame that a man hath to shewe him/ and namely these ypocrytes that wolde be holde so perfyte/ that they have no nede to shewe hem. Ayenst that shame shulde a man thynke that by way of reason that he that hath not be a shamed to do foule thynges/ certes him ought not be a shamed for to do fayre thynges/ and that is confessyons. A man shulde also thynke that god seeth and knoweth all his thoughtes and all his werkes: To him maye nothynge be hydde ne coverred. Men shulde also remembre hem of the shame that is to come at the daye of dome to hem that ben not penytent & shriuen in this presente lyfe: For al the creatures in erth and in hell shal se apertly/ al ꝑ they hydde in this worlde. Now for to speke of the hope of hem that ben so negligente & slowe to shewe hem: that stondeth in two maners. That one is/ that he hopeth for to lyue longe/ and for to purchace moche rychesse for his delyte/ and than he wol shewe him: And as he sayth/ him semeth than tymely enough to come to shrifte.

Another is of surquidue that he hath in chrystes mercy. Ayenst the firste vice he shall thynke that our lyfe is in no syckernesse/ and also that all the rychesses in this worlde ben in auenture/ and passe as a shadowe on the wall. And as sayethe saynt Gregoire/ that it appertayneth to the great righwysnesse of god/ that neuer shall the payne stynte of hem that neuer wolde withdrawe hem fro synne her thankes/ but euer contynued in synne: for that perpetual wyl to do syn/ shall they haue perpetuall payne. Wanhope is in two maners. The first wanhope is in ꝑ mercy of god.

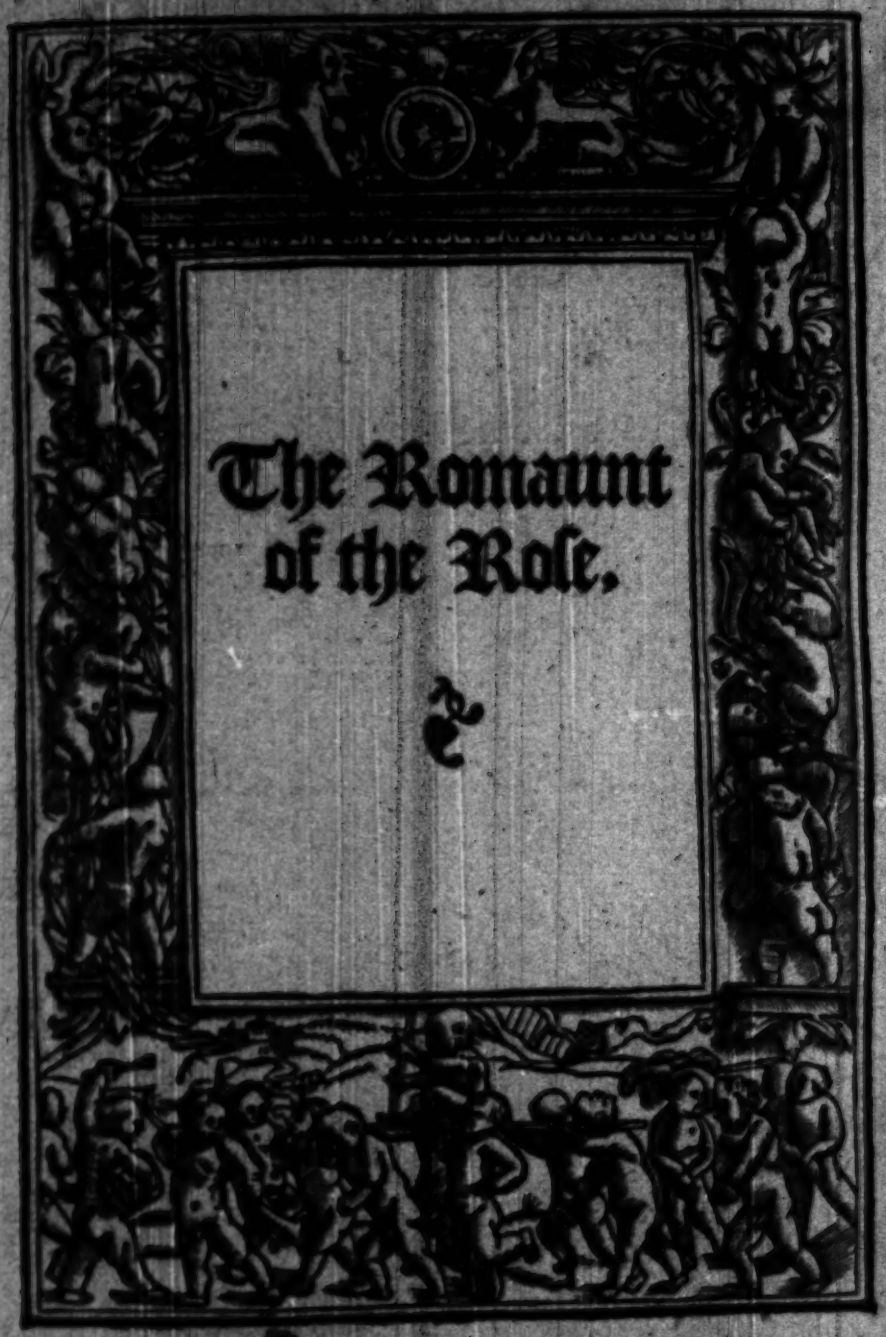
That

What other is that they thynke that they ne might not longe persewer in goodnesse. The first wanhope cometh of that he demeth that he hath synned so greatly and so ofte/ and so longe lyen in synne that he shal not be saued. Certes ayenst that cursed wanhope shulde he thynke that the passion of Jesu Christ is more stronge for to vnbynde than synne is stronge for to bynde. Ayenst the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as often as he falleth he may ryse agayne by penytence: and though he neuer so longe hath lyen in synne/ the mercy of Christ is alway redy to receyue hym to mercy. Ayenst the wanhope that he demeth he shulde not longe persewer in goodnes/ he shal thynke that the febleneſſe of the dyuel may nothynge do but if men wol suffre hym/ and also he shal haue strength of the helpe of Jesu Christ and of al holy churche/ and the protection of angels if hym lyste.

Than shall men vnderstonde what is the fruyte of penaunce/ and after the wordes of Jesu Christe/ it is endlesse blysse of heuen. There ioye hath neuer ende/ no contrarite of wo ne grenaunce: ther al harmes ben passed of this presente lyfe/ there as is the sykernesse fro the payne of hel/ there as is the blyssful company that reioyce hem euermo/ euerich of other ioye: there as the body of man/ that some tyme was foule and darke/ is more clere than the sonne: there as the body that somtyme was sicke/ freple/ and feble/ and mortal/ is immortal/ and so stronge a hole/ that there ne may nothyng appeyre it: there as is neyther hunger/ thurst/ ne colde/ but euery soule replenyssed with the sight of the perfyt knowyng of god. This blyssful reigne may men purchace by pouerte espirituel/ and the glorie by lowenesse/ the plente of ioye by hunger and thurst/ and the rest by trauayle/ and the lyfe by deth and mortyfication of synne: to which lyfe he vs bring: / that bought vs with his precious blode. A M E N.

Here endeth the Persones tale.

Thus endeth the boke of Canterbury tales. And hereafter foloweth the Romaunt of the Rose.


The Romaunt
of the Rose.

Many men sayn ¶ in sweuenynges
Ther nys but fables and lesynges
But me may sumtime sweuen sone
Whiche bardely ¶ false ne bene
But afterwarde ben apparaunt
This maye I drawe to warrament
An authour/ that hyght Macrobeus
That haste nat dremes false ne lees
But vndothe vs the auysement
That whilom mette kyng Cipesum
And who so sayth/ or weneth it be
A iape/ or ells vpette
To wene that dremes after fal
Lette who so lyste a fole me cal
For this trowe I/ and say for me
That dremes signifiaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes
That dremen in her slepe a nyghtes
Ful many thynges contrarie
That fallen after al openly
Within my twenty yere of age
Whan that loue taketh his corage
Of yonge folke/ I went soone
To bedde/ as I was wonte to done
And faste I slepte/ and in slepyng
Me mette suche a swetenyng
That lyked me wonders wele
But in that swauen is neuer a dele
That it nys afterwarde befal
Right as this dremer wol tel vs al.
¶ Lo we this dremer wol I ryme a right
To make your hertes gape and syght
For loue it prayeth/ and also
Comaundeth me that it be so
And if there any aske me
Whether that it be/ he or she
Halwe thin booke/ whiche is here
Shal hatte/ that I rede you here
It is the Romaunce of the Rose
In whiche al the arte of loue I close.
¶ The matter fayre is of to make
God graunt me my grer that she it take
For whom that it deuysed is
And that is she/ that hath ywis
So moche pris/ and therto she
So worthy is beloued to be
That she wel ought of pris and right
Be cleped Rose of pery bright
That it was May me thought tho
It is fyue yere or more ago
That it was May/ thus dremed me
In tyme of loue and iolyte
That al thyng gynneth wayen gay
For there is neyther buske nor hay
In May/ that it nyl shrouded bene
And it with newe leues wrene
These wodes eke arrouerey grene
That drie in wynter ben to sene
And the erthe weyeth proude withall
For swote dewes that on it fall
And the poore estate forgette
In whiche that wynter had it sette
And than becometh the grounde so proude
That it wol haue a newe shroude
And maketh so queynt his robe and fayre
That it had hewes an hundred payre
Of grasse and floures/ ynde and Pers
And many hewes ful diuers
That is the robe I mene ywis
Through whiche the grounde to prayse is
The briddes that han left her songe
Whyle they han suffred colde ful stronge
In wethers grysly/ and derked sight
Ben in May/ for the sonne bright
So gladde/ that they shewe in syngyng
That in her herte is suche lykyng
That they mote syngen and ben lyght
Than dothe the nightyngale her myght
To make nopse/ and syngen blythe
Than is blysful many a sythe
The chelaundre/ and the poppyngay
Than yonge folke entenden aye
For to ben gaye and amorous
The tyme is than so sauorous
Harde is his herte that loueth nought
In May/ whan al this mirthe is wrought
Whan he may on these braunches here
The smale briddes synge clere
Her blysful swete songe ypocus
And in this seson delytous
Whan loue affirmeth al thyng
Me thought one nyght/ in my slepyng
Right in my bedde/ ful erly
That it was by the morow tyde
And vp I rose/ and gan me clothe
Anon I wyste myn herdes bothe

A ſpryng nedyl ſothe I drowe
Out of an engyne queynt ynowe
And gan this nedyl threde anone
For out of towne me lyſte to gone
The ſowne of bridde for to here
That on theſe buſſhes ſyngen clere
That in the ſwete ſeaſon that leſe is
With a threde baſtyng my ſleuys
Alone I wente in my playeng
The ſmal fowles ſonge herkenyng
That payned hem ful many a payre
To ſynge on bowes blyſſomed fayre
Jolyſe and gaye/ ful of gladneſſe
Towarde a ryuer gan I me dreſſe
That I herde renne faſte by
For ſayrer playeng none ſaugh I
Than playen me by that ryuere
For from an hyl that ſtode there nere
Come downe the ſtreme full ſtyffe and bolde
Clere was the water/ and as colde
As any welle is/ ſothe to ſayne
And ſomdele laſſe it was than Hayne
But it was ſtrayter/ wele away
And neuer ſaugh I er that daye
The water that ſo wele lyked me
And wonder gladde was I to ſe
That luſty place/ and that ryuere
And with that water that ran ſo clere
My face I waſſhe/ tho ſawe I wele
The botome ypaued euerydele
With grauel/ ful of ſtones ſhene
The medowes ſoſte/ ſote/ and grene
Beet right on the water ſyde
Ful clere was than the morowe tyde
And ful attempre out of drede
Tho gan I walken thorowe the Wede
Downwarde ape/ in my playeng
The ryuers ſyde cooſtyng
And whan I had a while ygone
I ſawe a Garden right anone
Ful longe and brode/ and euerydele
Encloſed was/ and walled wele
With hye walles enbatayled
Portrayed without/ and wel entayled
With many riche portreptures
And bothe the ymages and peyntures
Gan I beholde beſely
And I wol tel you redely

Of thilke ymages the ſemblaunces
As ferre as I haue remembraunce.

¶ Amydde ſawe I Hate ſtonde
That for her wrathe and yre/ and enuye
Semed to be a mynderesſe
An angry wight a chideresſe
And ful of gyle/ and fel corage
By ſemblaunt was that ylke ymage
And ſhe was nothyng wele arayde
But ſpitous wode woman afrayde
Pfrounced foule was her vſage
And grynnyng for diſpitous rage
Her noſe ſnorted vp for tene
Ful hydous was ſhe for to ſene
Ful foule and ruſty was ſhe thus
Her herd ywrithen was ywis
Ful grymly with a great toayle.

¶ An ymage of another entayle
A ſyde halfe was her faſt by
Her name aboue her heed ſawe I
And ſhe was called Felony

¶ Another ymage that Dyſſany
pclyped was/ ſawe I and fonde
Vpon the wall on her right honde
Dyſſany was lyke ſomdele
That other ymage/ and trufleth wele
She ſemed a wrieched creature
By countenaunce in portreyture
She ſemed be ful diſpytous
And eke ful proude/ and outragious
Wel conde he paynt I vnderfonge
That ſuche an ymage conde make
Ful foule and chorliſch ſemed ſhe
And eke ſlyghtynesse for to be
And lyteł counſe of nourture
To worſſhippe any creature.

¶ And nexte was paynted Couetyſe
That eggeth folke in many a gyſe
To take and pene right nought ageynt
And grat treſours vp to ſayne
And that is ſhe/ that for vſure
Leneth to many a creature
The laſſe for the more wynnyng
So couetous is her bygynnyng
And that is ſhe for paunes ſcrile
That techeth for to robbe and ſtrele
Theſe theuys/ and theſe ſmale harlotes
And that is routhe/ for by her thewes

ful

Ful many otre sorquis at the last
She maketh fouke compasse and cast
To taken other foulkes thynge
Through robbery/ or mysseruynge
And that is she that maketh tresbouse
And she maketh false pledoure
That with her termes and her domes
Done maydens/ children/ and eke grooms
Her heritage to forgo
Ful crokid were her fyngres two
For courtyse is euer wode
To gripen other foulkes goode
Courtyse/ for her wynnyng
Ful lese hath other mennes thyng
¶ Another ymage sette I sawh I
Lepte Courtyse fast by
And she was cleped Auarice
Ful foule in payntyng was that vice
Ful sadde and crabbid was she eke
And also grene as any leke
So pale her bloo bode her colours
Her semed to haue vsed in sangoure
She was lyke thyng for hunger dede
That sadde her lyse ouerp by mede
Inwardly with eyzen stronge and egre
And therto she was leane and megre
And she was clabbe ful poorely
As in an olde toune courtyp
As she were al with beggres borne
And bothe barefote and eke beforne
Clouted was she beggarly
A mantel honge her fast by
Upon a benche wepde and smal
A burnette cote honge there with al
Furred with no menyuere
But with a furre rough of herre
Of lambe skynnes heep and blake
It was ful olde I vnder take
For Auarice to clothe her wele
She hasteth her neuer a dele
For certainly it were her lothe
To wearen ofte that ilke clothe
And if it were forweaned/ she
Wolde haue ful great aperte
Of clothyng/ er she bought her ones
Al were it habbe of wolf and fethe
This Auarice sethe in her handes
A purse that honge by a bandes
And that she hydde and bonde so stronge
Therne muste abyde wonder longe
Out of the purse er there come ought
For that ne cometh in her thought
It was not certayne her entent
That fro that purse a peny went
And by that ymage nygh ynough
Was paynted Enuy/ that neuer lough
Nor neuer wel in her herte ferde
But if she eyther sawe or herde
Some great mischaunce/ or great disese
Nothyng may so muche her plese
As mischefe and misauenture
Or whan she herth descomfyture
Upon any worthy man fall
Than lyketh her wel withall
She is ful glad in her corage
If she se any great lynage
Or brought to naught/ in shamful wyse
And if a man in honour ryse
Or by his wytte/ or by his prowesse
Of that hath she great heuynesse
For trusteth wel she gothe nye wood
Whan any chaunce happeth good
Enuye is of suche cruelte
That saythe ne trouthe holdeth she
To frende ne felawe/ badde or good
Ne she hath hymne none of her blood
That she nye ful her enemy
She nolde/ I dare sayne hardely
Her owne father sared wele
And sore abyeth she euery dele
Her malyce/ and her male talent
For shes in so great turment
And hate suche/ whan selfe dothe good
That nygh she melteth for pure wood
Her herte breuith and so bresteth
That god the people wel awreketh
Enuye thyng shal neuer set
Some blame vpon the selfe to set
I trowe that if Enuye thys
Knewe the best man that is
Or thes syde or beyonde the se
Yet somwhat sacherly him wolde she
And if he were so hende and wyse
That she ne might al abate his prise
Yet wolde she blame his worthynesse
Or by her wordes make it lesse

I sawe Enuye in that paynting
Had a wonderful lokyng
For she ne loked but awue
Or ouerthwarte/ al baggyngly
And she had a foule vsage
She might loke in no vysage
Of man ne woman/ forthe right playne
But shette her one eye for disdayne
So for enuye brenned she
Whan she might any man se
That fayre/ or worthye were/ or wyse
Or els stode in folkes prise
¶ Sorowe was paynted nexte Enuye
Upon that wal of masonrye
But wel was sene in her colour
That she had lyned in langour
Her semed to haue the raundice
Not halfe so pale was Anarye
Ne nothyng lyke of leanesse
For sorowe/thought/and great distresse
That she had suffred day and nyght
Wade her yelowe/ and nothyng vyght
Ful sade/pale/and megre also
Was neuer wight yet halfe so wo
As that her semed for to be
Nor so fulfylled with yre/as she
I trowe that no wight might her plese
Nor do that thyng that might her ese
Nor she ne wolde her sorowe slake
Nor comforte none vnto her take
So depe was her wo begonne
And eke her herte in angre ronne
A sorouful thyng wel semed she
Nor she had nothyng slowe be
For to cratchen al her face
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes/and for to teare her swyre
As she that was fulfylled of yre
And al to tome lay eke her heere
Aboute her shulders/here and there
As she that had it al to rent
For angre and for male talent
And eke I tel you certaynly
Howe that she wept ful tenderly
In wolde nye wyght so harde of herte
That had sene her sorowes smerte
That nolde haue had of her pyte
So wo begone a thyng was she
She al to dassht her selfe for wo
And smote togyder her handes two
To sorowe was she ful ententyfe
That woful restelesse captyfe
Her rought lytil of playeng
Or of clypping or kissyng
For who so sorouful is in herte
Him lyste not to play ne sterte
Ne for to daunten/ne to synge
Ne may his herte in temper brynge
To make ioye on eurry or morowe
For ioy is contrarie vnto sorowe.
¶ Elde was paynted after this
That shorter was a foote i wys
Than she was wonte in her yongthede
Unneth her selfe she might stede
So feble and eke so olde was she
That faded was al her beaute
Ful salowe was wexen her colour
Her heed for hore was whyte as flour
Iwys great qualme ne were it nolde
Ne synne/al though her lyfe were golde
Al wexen was her body vnwelde
And dre and dwyned al for elde
A foule forwelked thyng was she
That whylom rounde and softe had be
Her eerres shoken fast withall
As from her heed they wolde fall
Her face frounced and forpyned
And bothe her hondes sone forbwyned
So olde she was/that she ne went
A foote/but it were by potent
The tyme that passeth nyght and daye
And restlesse trauayleth aye
And fleeth from vs so pmely
That to vs semeth sykerly
That it in one poynt dwelleth euer
And certes it ne resteth neuer
But gothe so fast/and passeth aye
That there nys man that thynke may
What tyme that nowe present is
Asseth at these clerkes this
For may thynke it redily
Thre tymes ben passed by
The tyme that may not soiourne
But gothe/and may neuer retourne
As water that downe renneth aye
But neuer drop retourne may

Yfen

There may nothyng as tyme endure
Metal/nor erthly creature
For al thyng it frette and shal
The tyme eke that chaungeth al
And al dothe waste/and destroyeth
And al thyng destroyeth he
The tyme that eldeth our auncestrours
And eldeth kynges and emperours
And that we al shal ouercomen
Er that bethe we shal have nomen
The tyme that hath al my welde
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly/that to my bedyng
She might helpe her selfe nothyng
But turned ayen into childhede
She had nothyng her selfe to lede
Ne wyste ne pyth in her hede
Wors than a chylde of two yere elde
But natheles I trowe that she
Was fayre sometyme/and fresshe to se
Whan she was in her rightful age
But she was paste al that passage
And was a doted thyng berowne
A furred cappe on had she nowne
Wel had she clad her selfe and warme
For colde might al done her harme
These olde folke have alway colde
Her kynde is suche/whan they ben elde.
¶ Another thyng was don there wrot
That semed fyne ay Ipocryt
And it was cleped Pope Holy
That ilke is she/that pryuely
Ne spareth neuer a wicked dede
Whan men of her tabey name bede
And maketh her outwarde precious
With pale Vysage and pytous
And semeth a symple creature
But there nys no misaventure
That she ne thynketh in her corage
Ful fyne to her was thilke ymage
That masked was fyne her semblaunt
She was ful symple of countenaunce
And she was clothed and eke shod
As she were for the loue of god
Yelden to religyon
Suche semed her deuocion
A pfauter halde she fayre in honde
And beseely she gan to fonde
To make many a fayntle prayere
To god/ and to his sayntes dere
Ne she was gape/ fresshe/ ne iolyfe
But semed to be ful ententyfe
To good werkes/and to fayre
And therto she had on an hayre
Ne certes she was fatte nothyng
But semed wery for fastyng
Of colour pale and dede was she
From her the gates aye werned be
Of paradyse/that blyssful place
For suche folke maken leane her grace
As Ihuss sayethe in his Euangyle
To gette hem puse in to wine a whyle
And for a fyned glory vayne
They lesen god and eke his reigne.
¶ And aldertast of euerychone
Was paynted Pouert al alone
That not a peny had in holde
Al though she her clothes solde
And though she shulde an honged be
For naked as a worme was she
And if the wether stormy were
For colde she shulde haue dyed there
She ne had on but a streyte olde sacke
And many a cloute on it there stacke
Thus was her cote/ and her mantele
No more was there neuer abele
To clothe her with/I vnderstande
Great leyser had she to quake
And she was put/that I of talke
Ferre fro these other/vp in an halke
There lurked/ and there coured she
For poore thyng where so it be
In shamfastle/and dispysed aye
Accursed may wel be that daye
That poore man conceyued is
For god wote al to selde iwys
Is any poore man wel ysedde
Or wel arayed or ycledde
Or wel beloued/in suche wyse
In honour/ that he may aryse.
¶ Al these thinges wel auysed
As I haue you er this deuysed
With golde and asure ouer all
Depeynted were vpon the wall
Square was the wall/and hyght semdeth
Enclosed/ and ybarred wele

In fiede of hegge/ was that gardyn
Come neuer shepherde therin
In to that gardyn/ wel wrought
Who so that me coulde haue brought
By ladders/ or els by degre
It wolde wel haue lyked me
For suche solace/ suche toy/ and pley
I trowe that neuer man ne sey
As was in that place delycious
The gardyn was not daungerous
To herbero we brydes many one
So ryche a pere was neuer none
Of brydes songe/ and braunches grene
Therin were brydes mo I wene
Than ben in al the realme of Fraunce
Ful blyssful was the accordaunce
Of swete pytous songe they made
For al this worlde it ought glade
And I my selfe so mery ferde
Whan I her blyssful songes herde
That for an hundred ponde wolde I
If that the passage openly
Had be vnto me free
That I nolde entren for to se
Thassemble/ god kepe it fro care
Of brydes/ whiche therin ware
That songen through her mery throtes
Daunces of loue/ and mery notes.

Whan I thus herde foules synge
I fel sastly in a waymentyng
By whiche arte/ or by what engyn
I might come in to that gardyn
But way I couthe fynde none
In to that gardyn for to gone
Ne nought wyst I if that there were
Eyther hole or place where
By whiche I might haue entre
Ne there was none to teche me
For I was al a lone I wys
For wo and anguisshe of this
Tyl at laste bethought I me
That by no way ne might it be
That there nas ladder ne way to pace
Or hole/ in to so fayre a place
Tho gan I go a ful great pas
Enuyron/ euen in compas
The closyng of the square walle
Tyl that I founde a wycket smalle
So shette/ that I ne might in gone
And other entre was there none.

Upon this dore I gan to smyte
That was fetys/ and so lyte
For other way couthe I not seke
Ful longe I shoke/ and knocked eke
And stode ful longe al herkenyng
If that I herde any wight comyng
Tyl that the dore of thylke entre
A mayden curteys opened me
Her herte was as pelowe of hewe
As any basen scoured newe
Her flesshe tender as is a chyke
With bent browes/ smothe and slyke
And by mesure large were
The openyng of her eyen clere
Her nose of good proporcion
Her eyen gray/ as is a faucon
With swete brethe/ and wel sauoured
Her face whyte/ and wel coloured
With lytel mouthe and rounde to se
A cloue chynne eke had she
Her necke was of good fassyon
In length and gretnesse by reson
Without bleyne/ scabbe/ or royne
Fro Hierusalem vnto Burgoyne
There nys a fayer nerbe twyse
To sele how we smothe and softe it is
Her throte also whyte of hewe
As snowe on braunche snowed newe
Of body ful wel wrought was she
Wey neden not in no countre
A fayer body for to seke
And of fyne Dystrayn had she eke
A chapelet/ so semely on
Ne were neuer made vpon
And fayre about that chapelet
A rose garlande had she set
She had a gay mirrour
And with a ryche golde tressour
Her heed was tressed queyntely
Her sleues sewed seruysly
And for to kepe her handes fayre
Of glouis whyte she had a payre
And she had on a cote of grene
Of cloutshe of Gaunt/ without envy wene

Wel semed by her apparayle
She was not wonte to great trauayle
For whan she kempt was seemely
And wel arayed and richely
Than had she done al her nourture
For mery and wel begon was she
She ladde a lusty lyfe in May
She had no thought/ by night ne day
Of nothyng/ but yf it were ought
To grayth her wele and honestly.

Whan that this boke had opened me
Thus May/ sauely for to se
I thonked her ne I beste myght
And asked her fayre that she hyght
And what she was/ I asked eke
And she to me was nought vnmeke
Ne of her answere daungerous
But fayre answerde/ and sayd thus
Lo sir/ my name is Idelnesse
So clepe men me/ more and lesse
Ful mighty and ful ryche am I
And that of one thyng namely
For I entende to nothyng
But to myn ease/ and my playeng
And for to bende and tresse me
Aquaynted am I and prime
With Wythe/ lorde of this gardyns
That fro the lande of Alexandrine
Made the trees hyther be sette
That in this garden ben ysette
And whan the trees were wayen on hyght
This wall/ that stante here in thy syght
Dyd Wythe enclosen al aboute
And these ymages al without
He dyd hem bothe entayle and peynte
That neyther ben ioliyfe ne queynte
But they ben ful of foule lue and wo
As thou hast seen a whyle ago.

And ofte tyme hem to solace
Sir Wythe cometh in to this place
And eke with hem cometh his meyne
That ryoten in lustes and iolyte
And no we as Wythe eherry/ to fere
The birdes ho we they synge clere
The maupe and the nyghtyngale
And other iolyf birdes smale
And thus he walketh to solace
Hym and his folke/ for swetter place
To playen in/ he may not fynde
Al though he sought out in tyl Inde
The alther sayrest solle to se
That in this worlde may founde be
Hath Wythe with hym in his route
That folowen hym al wayes aboute.

Whan Idelnesse had tolde al this
And I had herkened wel i wys
Than sayd I to dame Idelnesse
Now we also wisly god me blesse
Sythe Wythe/ that is so fayre and fre
Is in this yerde/ with his meyne
Fro thyne assemble/ if I may
Shal no man werne me to day
That I this nyght ne mote it se
For wel wene I there with hym be
A fayre and iolyf compayne
Fulfylled of al curtesye
And forthe without wordes mo
In at the wicket went I tho
That Idelnesse had opened me
In to that garden fayre to se.

And whan I was in i wys
Myn herte was ful glad of this
For wel wende I ful syker ly
Haue ben in paradyse certily
So fayre it was/ that trusteth wel
It semed a place espyritel
For certes as at my deuyse
There is no place in paradyse
So good in for to dwell or be
As in that garden thought me
For there was many a bryde synging
Throughout the perde al thringing
In many places were nightyngales
Alpes/ synches/ and wodwales
That in her swete songe delyten
In thilke places as they habyten
There mught men se many flockes
Of turtles and fauerockes
Chalaundres fele sawe I there
That shery nyght forsongen were
And chaffinches/ feryns/ and mauys
That songen for to wynne hem pris

And

And eke to surmount in her songe
That other bryddes hem amonge
Up note made sayre serwyse
These bryden/that I you devyse
They songe her songe/as sayre and well
As angels doy eyther mell
And trusteth me/ whan I hem herde
Ful lusty and wel I ferde
For neuer yet suche melodye
Was herde/of man that might dye
Suche swete songe was hem amonge
That me thought it no bryddes songe
But it was wonder lyke to be
Songe of Meremaydens of the see
That for her syngyng is so clere
Though we mermaydens clepe hem here
In englysshe/ as is our Vsaunce
Hey clepe hem Serenys in Fraunce.

Attentyse weren for to synge
These bryddes/that not vnsonnyng
Were of her craste/ and attentyse
But of songe subtyl and wyse
And certes/ whan I herde her songe
And sawe the grene place amonge
In herte I weyt so wonder gay
That I was neuer erst/ er that day
So iolyse/nor so wel bygo
Ne mery in herte/as I was tho
And than wyste I/ and sawe ful wel
That pdelnesse me serued wel
That me put in suche iolyte
Her frende wel ought I for to be
Sythe she the dore of that gardyn
Had opened/and me lette in.

From hence forthe/ howe that I wrought
I shall you telle/ as me thought
First wherof Wythe serued there
And eke what folke there with him were
Without fable I wol disclose
And of that garden eke as blyue
I wol you telley after this
The sayre fassyon al ywys
That wel wrought was for the nones
I may not tel you al atones
But as I may and can/ I shal
By order telley you it al

Ful sayre serwyse/and eke ful swete
These bryddes made as they sate
Layes of loue/ful wel so wrytyng
They songen in her iargonyng
Some hye/ and some eke so me songe
Vpon the braunches gryne ispronge
The swetnesse of her melodye
Made al myn herte in remembre
And whan that I had herde I trowe
These bryddes syngyng on a rowe
Thy might I not with holde me
That I ne went in for to se
Sir Wythe/for my desyryng
Was him to serue ouer al thyng
His countenaunce and his maneres
That sygte was to me ful dere.

Tho went I forthe on my right hande
Downe by a lytel pathe I fonde
Of myntes ful/ and fenkil grene
And fasie by without wene
Syr Wythe I founde/ and right anon
Vnto sir Wythe gan I gon
There as he was him to solace
And with him/ in that lusty place
So sayre folke and so fresshe had he
That whan I sawe/I wondred me
Fro whence suche folke might come
So sayre they weren al and some
For they were lyke/ as to my sygte
To angels/ that bern fetheres bryght.
These folke/ of whiche I tel you so
Vpon a karole wenten tho
A lady karoled hem/that sygte
Gladnesse/ blysful and sygte
Wel couthe she synge and lustely
None halfe so wel and semely
And couthe make in songe suche refreynyng
I se not her wonder wel to synge
Her bodye ful clere was and ful swete
She was not rude ne vnmete
But couthe ynough of suche doyng
As longeth vnto karollyng
For she was wonte in euery place
To synger first/folke to solace
For syngyng mosie she gaue her to
No craste had she so lefe to do.

The

Thys mayster shewd Narcissus sone
And fonde bawme and mery bone
And made many a fayre tournyng
Upon the gronde amydde pleyenyng
There mayster shewd he eke fantoyes
Hypocrisies and eke iapes
That wel to synge byd her payne
Some songe songes of Louayne
For in Louayne hir moder be
Ful sutteler they in this countre
There was many a tymbestere
And sayleresse/ that I dare wele swere
Louyde fet craftis ful parfitly
The tymbres vp ful subtelly
They caste/ and trente ful ofte
Upon a synger fayre and softe
That they soryed neuer mo
Ful fetys damoyselys tho
Right yonge/ and ful of fresshehede
In bryttes/ and none other werke
And fayre tresses euery tresse
Had Cupide bonde for hys noblesse
Ampdde the cercle for to daunce
Dut herof lyeth no remembraunce
Ho we that they daunsed queryntly
That one moche coome al pinchy
Ayayne that other/ and whan they were
To gyther almoste/ they threwe yfere
Her mouthes so/ that though her play
It semed as they kyssie alway
To daunces wel couthe they the gyse
What shulde I more to you deuyse
Sir soothe I neuer shewe go
Wyssen that I sawe suy daunce so
Upon the sareff wonder fayre
I may beholde/ tyl at laste
A lady gan me for to espye
And she was clepyd Curtesye
The worshypful/ the debonayre
I pray to god euer fall her fayre
Ful curteysly she called me
What do ye there Beau sire (quod she)
Come/ and if it lyke you
To daunce/ beau sire I wil you make
And I without tarying
Went in to the karolying
I was abaysshed neuer a dele
But it to me lyked right wele
That Curtesy me clepyd so
And bade me on the daunce go
For if I had durste certayne
I wolde haue karoled right fayne
As many that was to daunce right blyssie
Than gan I fisshen ofte syde
The shap/ the bodyes/ and the chere
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of al the folke that daunsed there
And I shal tel what they were.

Ful fayre was Wyrthe/ ful longe & fryth
A fayrer may I neuer syth
As rounde as appel was his face
Ful roddy and whyte in euery place
Fetys he was and wel besey
With metely mouthe/ and eyen grey
His nose by measure wrought ful right
Lyppes was his sweete/ and eke ful bright
His shuldres of a large brede
And smally/ sithe in the gyrdelstede
He semed lyke a purtreyture
So noble he was of his stature
So fayre/ so iolyf/ and so fetyse
Wath lymmes wrought at poynt deuyse
Desyrer/ smerte/ and of great myght
Ne sawe thou neuer man so syght
Of berde vnneth had he nothyng
For it was in the first spryng
Ful yonge he was/ and mery of thought
And in sauntte/ with bridel wrought
And with golde beten ful fetously
His body was clad ful richly
Wrought was his robe in straunge gyse
And al to slyttered for queryntyse
In many a place/ lowe and hye
And shode he was with great mayestye
With shone decoped/ and with lace
By daury/ and by solace
His sercle a rosen chapelet
Had made/ and on his herd it set
And wote ye who was his fere
Dame Gladnesse there was hym so lefe
That syngeth so wel with glad corage
That semy she was ryght yong of age
Like of her bone grauen semy made
Her thynke her by the synger glade
Daunsyng/ and she hym also

Anon

Great loue was a wyght hem two
Bothe were they fayre and bright of hewe
She semed lyke a rose newe
Of colours/ and her flesshe so tendre
That with a litle smale and tendre
Men might it cleue/ I dare wel sey
Her forheed frouncles al pley
Bent were her browes two
Her eyen gray/ and glad also
That laughedeu aye in her semblaunt
First or the mouthe by couenaunt
I wot not what of her nose I shal discryue
So fayre hath no woman a lyue
Her heere was yelowe/ and clere shynyng
I wot no lady so lyking
Of Oliues freshe/ was her garlande
I whiche seme haue a thousande
Sawe neuer twyes no garlande yet
So wel wrought of fyne as it
And in an ouergylte samyte
Clad de she was/ by great delyte
Of whiche her leese a robe werde
The meryer she in her herte ferde
And next her went/ on her other syde
The god of loue/ that can deuyde
Loue/ and as him lyketh it be
But he can cherles daunten/ he:
And maken folkes put: fallen
And he can wel these lordes thrallen
And ladyes put at lowe degre
Whan he may hem to proude se.

This god of loue of his fasoun
Was lyke no knaue/ ne quystroun
His beutie greatly was to prise
But of his robe to deuyse
I drede encombred for to be
For not yclad in fyne was he
But al in flowres and flourettes
Ypaynted al with amourettes
And with losenges and scochons
With lyndes/ lyberdes/ and lyons
And other bestes wrought ful wele
His garnement was euerydele
Ypurtrayed and ywrought with floures
By dyuers medelyng of colours
Flowres there were of many gyse
Iset by compace in a syse
There lacked no flowre to my deme
Ne not so mocke as flowre of breme
Ne Violet/ ne ele perwynke
Ne flowre noyr/ that men can on thynke
And many a rose lefe ful longe
Was entermedled there amonge
And also on his heed was set
Of roses red a chapelet
But nightyngales a ful great route
That flyen ouer her heed aboute
The leaues felden as they flyen
And he was al with lyndes wryen
With popingay/ with nightyngale
With chalaundre/ and with wodewale
With fynche/ with larke/ & with archangell
He semed as he were an angell
That do wne were comen fro heuen clere
Loue had with him a bacheler
That he made alwayes with him be
Swete Lokyng/ cleped was he
This bacheler stode beholdyng
The daunce/ and in his honde holdyng
Turbe bowes two/ ful wel denyfed had he
That one of hem was of a tree
That beareth a fruite of sauoure wicke
Ful croked was that foule stycke
And knoty here and there also
And blacke as bery/ or any slo
That other bowe was of a plante
Without wemme/ I dare warante
Ful euen and by proporcioun
Trecles & longe/ of ful good fasyoun
And it was payntid wel and tichatly
And ouer al deapted and wantly
With ladyes and with bacheleres
Ful lyghtsome and glad of cheres
These bowes two helde Swete Lokyng
That semed lyke no gadelyng
And ten strode arowes helde he there
Of whiche fyue in his right honde were
But they were fhauen wel and dyght
Nocked/ and fethered aryght
And al they were with golde begon
And stronge poynted euerychon
And sharpe for to kerue wele
But pitie was there noon me feele
For al was gone/ men might se
But take the fethers and the tre.

The fyrſte of theſe arowes fyue
Out of a bowe for to dryue
Two veſt fethered for to flye
And fayreſt elle/was cleped Beaute
That other arowe/that hurteth laſſe
Was cleped (as I trowe) Symplaſſe
The thyrde cleped was Frauncheſſe
That fethered was in noble wyſe
With valour and with curteſye
The fourthe was cleped compayne
That ſemy for to ſhoten is
But who ſo ſhoteth right thys
They therwith doy great harme and wo
The fyfte of theſe/and laſte alſo
Hayte Semblaunt may that arowe call
The leeſt greuous of hem all
Yet can it make a full great wounde
But he may hope his ſores ſounde
That hurte is with that arowe thyrde
His wo the bette beſtowed is
For he may ſoner haue gladneſſe
His langour ought be the leſſe.

Hate arowes were of other gyſe
That hen ful foule to deuyſe
For ſhafte and ende/ſothe for to tell
Were alſo blacke as ſende in hell
The firſt of hem is called Pryde
That other arowe next hym beſyde
It was cleped Dyſdayne
That arowe was/as with felonye
Enuenymed/and with ſpytous blame
The thirde of hem was cleped Shame
The fourthe Wanhope cleped is
The fyfte the Newe thought thys.

These arowes that I ſpeke of here
Were al ſpun on one manere
And al were they vnſemblable
To hem that well ſpytyng and eble
The foule croked bowe Eyhowne
That Enuy hight/and al toyſowne
That bowe ſtonde well to ſhote
These arowes from/that hen ſhotte
And contrarye to that other ſyue
Dut thought I will not an hyue
Of her power/ne of her myght
Make ſpeche for I holde myght
The ſothe/and eke ſaye playnly
As ferre as I haue remembraunce
Al ſhal be ſayd I vndertake
Er of this booke an ende I make.

Nowe came I to my tale agayne
But alderfirſt I wol you ſayne
The paſſyon and the countenaunces
Of al the folke that on the daunce is
The god of Loue wyſe and fyght
Ladde on his honde a lady bright
Of hygh puiſe/and of great degre
Thus lady called was Beaute
And an arowe/of whiche I tolde
Ful wel therwith was ſhe holde
Ne ſhe was derke ne browne/but bright
And clere as the moone lyght
Agayne whom al the ſterres ſemen
But ſmale candels/as we demen
Her fleſſhe was tendre as dewe of floure
Her chere was ſymple as byrde in boure
As whyte as lylye or roſe in eyſe
Her face gentyl and tretyſe
Fetys ſhe was/and ſmale to ſe
No wyntred browes had ſhe
Ne popped her/for it neded nought
To wyndre her/or to paynte her ought
Her treſſes yelowe/and longe ſtraughtyng
Vnto her heles dowue they raughtyng
Her noſe/her mouthe/eye and eſpe
Wel wrought/and al the remenaunt eke
A ful great ſauour and a ſwote
We thought in myn herte rote
As helpe me god/whan I remembre
Of the paſſyon of euery membre
In worlde is none ſo fayre a wyght
For ponge ſhe was/and ſhewed bright
Bore pleſaunt/and ſemy with all
Gent/and in her myddell ſmall
Beſyde Beaute ſtode Gentileſſe
And hygh lady of great nobleſſe
And great of port in euery place
Dut who ſo durſte to her treſpace
Diſyſ her ſolde/in werke or bokes
He were ful ſharply out of lokes
For bolde ſhe helpe and ſtrenge inough
And ſhet is out of reſtehap
That ryche ſolke haue ful great myght

To helpe/ and eke to greue a wight
The best and greatest of baseur
Dydden Richesse ful great honour
And besy weren her to serue
For that they wolde her lone deserue
They cleped her Lady great and smal
This wyde worlde her dredeth al
This worlde is al in her daungere
Her courte hath many a losengere
And many a traytour enuyous
That ben ful besy and curious
For to dispreyse/ and to blame
That best deserueth loue and name
To some the folke hem to begyle
These losyngeours hem preyse and smyle
And thus the worlde with worde anoyeth
But afterwarde they pull and poyeth
The folke/ right to the bare bone
Behynde her backe whan they ben gone
And foule abaten folkes puse
Ful many a worthy man and wyse
Han hyndred/ and pdon to dye
These losyngeours with her flatery
And maketh folke ful straunge be
There as hem ought ben pryue
Wel ouel mote they thryue and theer
And ouel arryued mote they be
These losengeours ful of enuy
No good man loueth her company.

Richesse a robe of purple on hadde
Ne trowe nat that I lye or madde
For in this worlde is none it lyche
Ne by a thousande dele so riche
Ne none so fayre/ for it ful wele
With Orfreys seyde was euerydele
And purtrayde in the rybanynges
Of dubes stones/ and of kynges
And with a bende of golde tassyled
And knoppes fyne of golde ouyled
About her necke of gentyl entayle
Was shette the riche Chenesayle
In whiche there was ful great plente
Of stones clere/ and fayre to se.
Richesse a gyrdel had vpon
The boskel of it was of a ston
Of vertue great/ and mokel of myght
For who so bare the stone so bright
Of hunger durst him nothyng dout
Whyle he the stone had hym about
That stone was greatly for to loue
And tyel a riche mannes bihoue
Worthe al the golde in Rome/ and Fryse
The Mourdant wrought in noble gyse
Was of a stone ful precious
That was so fyne and vertuous
That whole a may it couthe make
Of passyr/ and of clothe abe
And yet the stone had suche a grace
That he was sober in euery place
Al thylke day not dronke to bene
That fastyng myght that stone sene
The barres were of golde ful fyne
Vpon a tyssue of Satyne
Ful heuy/ great/ and nothyng lyght
In euerythe was a besaunt wyght
Vpon the tresses of rychesse
Was set a cercle for noblesse
Of brende golde/ that ful bright shone
So fayre trowe I was neuer none
But he were bonnyng for the nones
That couthe deuyse al the stones
That in that cercle shewen clere
It is a wonder thyng to here
For no man couthe preyse or gesse
Of hem the value or richesse
Rubyes there were/ Saphers/ Ragounces
And Emeraudes/ more than two ounces
But al before ful subtilly
A fyne Charboncle sette sawe I
The stone so clere was and so bright
That al so sone as it was nyght
Men myght sene to go for nede
A myle or two/ in length and brede
Suche light sprange out of the stone
That Richesse wonder bright shone
Bothe her hed/ and al her face
And eke aboute her al the place
Dame Richesse on her honde gan lede
A ponge man ful of semelyhede
That she best loued of any thyng
His luste was mocke in bourdyng
In clothyng was he ful fetyse
And loued wel to haue horse of pryse
He wende to haue renowned be
Of theftes or murdre/ if that he

Had in his stable my fayrenesse
And therfore he despysed myne
To ben acompayned with Richesse
For al his purpose/as I gesse
Was for to make great despense
Without sparyng or defence
And Richesse myght it well sufferne
And her dispences were mayntene
And hym alway suche plentie sende
Of golde and syluer for to spende
Without lackyng or daungere
As it were pouder in a gerner.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse/ that sette al her entent
For to ben honorable and free
Of Alexanders kynne was she
Her moste ioye was y wis
When that she pase/ and sawe this
Nat Auarice the foule caytyse
Was halfe to grype so ententyfe
As Largesse is/ to yeue and spende
And god alwaye yaue her frende
Ha that the more she paue awaye
The more y wis she had alwaye
Great loos hath Largesse/ and great prise
For bothe wyse folke and vnwyse
Were wyshy to her bandon brought
So wel with yeftes hath she wrought
And if she had an enemy
I trowe that she couthe craftely
Make hym ful soone her frende to be
So large of yeftes/and wyse was she
Therfore she stode in loue and grace
Of riche and poore in euery place
A ful great foole is he y wis
That bothe riche and poore/ and nygarde is
A lorde may haue no maner pryce
That greueth more than auarice
For nygarde neuer with strength of hande
May wynne hym great lordship or lande
For frenden al to se we hath he
To done his wyll personned he
And who so wyll haue frendes fewe
He maye nat holde his treasour newe
For by ensample tel I this
Right as an abstinent y wis
Lay diuers to hym sykenesse
The yron/that is layde therby
So deuouth folkes seruen hym
Syluer and golde that semyth
Largesse had on a robe fresshe
Of riche purpure Sarsynysshe
Wel fourmed was her face and clere
And opened had she her coffre
For she right there had in presente
Vnto a lady made present
Of a golde brothe/ful wel wrought
And certes it missate her naught
For through her smocke wrought with sylke
The fleshe was fene as whyte as mylke
Largesse/ that worthy was and wyse
Held by the honde a knyght of pryse
Was syster to Arthour of Bretayne
And that was he that bare the enseygne
Of worshyp/and the Gouffanoun
And yet he is of suche renoun
That men of hym say sayre thynges
Before barons/ erles/ and kynges
This knyght was comen al newly
Fro tourneyeng faste by
There had he done great chyualrie
Through his vertue and his maystrie
And for the loue of his lemman
He caste do wne many a doughty man
And nexte hym daunced dame Fraunchise
Arayed in ful noble gyse
She nas nat blo wne ne dunne of hewe
But white as sno we ypalled newe
Her nose was wrought at poynt deuyse
For it was gentyl and tretyse
With eyen glade/ and blo wes bent
Her heer do wne to her heles went
And she was symple as do wne on tree
Ful debonayre of hert was she
She durst neither saye ne do
But that/that hyr longeth to
And if a man were in distresse
And for her loue in heuynesse
Her herte wolde haue ful great pyte
She was so amyable and free
For were a man for her beslodde
She wolde ben right sore a dradde
That she dyd ouer great outrage
But she hym holpe his harme to swage
Her thought it al a sykenesse

And she had on a surcoty
That nat of hempe heerdes was
So fayre was none in al Arras
Lorde it was ryddeled fetysly
There nas nat a poynt trewly
That it nas in his right assyse
Ful wel yclothed was Fraunchise
For there nys no clothe sytteth bette
Thy damosel/ than dothe roksette
A woman wel more fetyse is
In roksette/ than in cote ywis
The white roksette ryddeled fayre
Betokeneth that ful debonayre
And swete was she that it bere
By her daunced a Bachelere
I can nat tellen you what he hyght
But fayre he was and of good hyght
Al had he ben/ I saye no more
The lordes sonne of Wyndesore.
¶ And nexte that daunced Curtesy
That preysed was of lowe and hye
For neither proude ne fole was she
She for to daunce called me
I praye god gyue her good grace
For whan I come first in to the place
She nas nat nyce/ ne outrageous
But wyse and ware/ and vertuous
Of fayre speche/ and fayre answere
Was neuer wight myssayde of here
She bare no rancour to no wyght
Clere browne she was/ and therto bright
Of face and body auenaunt
I wotte no lady so plesaunt
She were worthy for to bene
An emperesse or crowned quene.
And by her went a Knyght dauncyng
That worthy was and wel spekyng
And ful wel conde he done honour
The knyght was fayre and stysse in stour
And in armure a semely man
And welbeloued of his leman.
¶ Fayre Idelnesse than saugh I
That alwaye was me fast by
Of her haue I without fayle
Tolde you the shappe and appareyle
For (as I sayd) Lo/ that was she
That dyd to me so great bounte
She the gate of that gardyn
Vndyd/ and let me passen in
And after daunced as I gesse
And she fulfylled of lustynesse
That nas not yet.yu.yere of age
With herte lyghte/ and thought volage
Nyce she was/ but she ne mente
None harme ne slenght in her entente
But onely lust and solyte
For ponge folke/ wel weten ye
Haue lytel thought/ but on her play
Her lemman was besyde alway
In suche a gyse that he her kyste
At al tymes that him lyste
That al the daunce myght it se
They make no force of pleynte
For who so spake of hem yuel or wele
They were a shamed neuer a dele
But men might sene hem kysse there
As it two ponge dowues were
For ponge was thylke bachelere
Of beaute wot I non his pere
And he was right of suche an age
As Youthe his lefe/ and suche corage
The lusty folke that daunced there
And also other that with hem were
That weren al of her meyne
Ful hende folke/ wyse/ and free
And folke of fayre porte trucly
There were al comenly
Whan I had sene the countenaunces
Of hem that laddren thus these daunces
Than had I wyl to goy and se
The gardyn that so lyked me
And lokey on these fayre Laurelles
On Pyne trees/ Cedres/ and Olyueres
The daunces than ended were
For many of hem that daunced there
Were with her loues went away
Vnder the trees to haue her play.

A Lorde they lyued lustely
A great foole were he sykerly
That nolde his thankes suche lyfe lede
For this dare I sayne out of drede
That who so myght so wel fare
For better lyfe durst him not care
For there nys so good paradyse
As to haue a lemman at his deuyse

Du

Out of that place went I tho
And in that gardyn gan I go
Playeng a lonye ful merely
The god of Loue ful hastely
Vnto hym Swete Ioyeng clepte
No lenger wolde he that she kepte
His bowe of golde/that shone so bryghte
He had hym bent anon ryghte
And he ful sone sette an ende
And at a brayde he gan it bende
And toke hym of his arowes fyue
Ful sharpe and redy for to dryue
Nowe god that sytteth in maieste
Fro deedly woundes he kepe me
If so be that he hadde me spyed
For if I with his arowe were mete
It had me greued sore I wis
But I that nothyng wyste of this
Went vp and downe/ful many a way
And he me folowed faste alway
But no where wolde I rest me
Tyll I had in al the gardyn be.

THe gardyn was by mesuryng
Right euen and square in compasyng
It as longe was as it was large
Of fruite had euery tree his charge
But it were any fyndous tree
Of whiche there were two or three
There were/and that wote I ful wele
Of Pome garnettes a ful great dele
That is a fruite ful swete to fyde
Namely to folke whan they ben fyde
And trees there were/great foyson
That barey nuttes in her seasoy
Suche as men notangeres call
That swote of sauour ben withall
And Almandres great plente
Fygges/and many a date tre
There were eke/if men had nede
Through the gardyn/in length and brede
There was eke kerrying many a spyce
As clowe gylofre/and lycorice
Gyngere/and grayn de Parys
Canell/and setewale of pris
And many a spyce delytable
To eten whan men ryse fro table
And many homely trees there were
That peches/coynes/and appres bere
Wedelers/plommers/perres/chesteynes
Cherise/of whiche many one fayne is
Notes/elrys/and bolas
That forto sene it was solas
With many hygh fayrer/and pyne
Was renged clene al that gardyne
With Cipres/and with Olyueris
Of whiche that nygh no plenty here is
There were Elmes great and stronge
Maples/asshe/oke/aspe/plances longe
Fyne ewe/popler/and lyndes fayre
And other trees ful many a payre
What shulde I tel you more of it?
There were so many trees yet
That I shulde al encombred be
Er I had rekened euery tree
These trees were sette that I deuyse
One from another in assyse
Fyue fadome or sixe/I trowe so
But they were hye and great also
And for to kepe out wel the sonne
The croppes were so thicke ymonne
And euery braunche in other knytte
And ful of grene leues sytte
That sonne myght there none discende
Lest the tender grasses shende
Therein myght men Does and Roes y se
And of squyrels ful great plente
From bowe to bowe al waye leppynge
Conies there were also playenge
That comyn out of her clapers
Of sondue colours and maners
And maden many a tournoyeng
Vpon the fresshe grasse spryngyng
In places sawe I welles there
In whiche there no frogges were
And fayre in shadowe was euery wel
But I ne can the nombre tel
Of stremys smal that by deuyse
Wythe had done come through condyse
Of whiche the water in rennyng
Gan make a noyse ful lykyng
About the bankes of these welles
And by the stremes euer al elles
Sprange vp the grasse as thicke yset
And softe as any velvet
On whiche men myght hem sommen by

As on a fetherbed to pley
For the erthe was ful soste and swete
Through moisture of the wel wete
Spronge vp the sote grene gras
As fayre/ as thicke/ as myster was
But moche amended it the place
That therthe was of suche a grace
That it of floures hath plente
That bothe in somer and wynter be
There sprange the violet al newe
And fresshe perwynke riche of hewe
And floures yelowe/ white/ and rede
Suche plente grewe there neuer in mede
Ful gaye was al the grounde and queynt
And poudred/ as men had it peynt
With many a fresshe and sondry floure
That casten vp ful good sauour
I wol not longe holde you in fable
Of al this garden delectable
I mote my tonge stynten nede
For I ne maye withouten drede
Naught tellen you the beaute al
Ne halfe the bounte there with al
I went on right honde and on lefte
About the place/it was nat lefte
Tyl I had al the garden bene
In the eftere that men myght sene
And thus while I wente in my playe
The god of loue me folowed aye
Right as an hunter can abyde
The beest/ tyl he seeth his tyde
To shoten at goodmesse to the dere
Whan that hym nedeth go no nere
And so befyl/ I rested me
Besydes a wel vnder a tree
Whiche tree in Fraunce men cal a Pyne
But sithe the tyme of vyng Peppyne
Ne grewe there tree in maunes syght
So fayre/ ne so wel woxe in hight
In al that parde so high was none
And sprungyng in a marble stone
Had nature set/the sothe to tel
Vnder that pyne tree a wel
And on the border al without
Was writtyn in the stone about
Letters smal/that sayden thus
Here starfe the fayre Narcisus.
Narcisus was a bachelere
That loue had caught in his daungere
And in his nette gan hym so strayne
And dyd him so to wepe and playne
That nede hym must his lyfe forgo
For a fayre lady that hight Echo
Him loued ouer any creature
And gan for hym suche payne endure
That on a tyme she hym tolde
That if she her louen nolde
That her behoued nedes dye
There laye none other remedy
But natheles for his beaute
So fers and daungerous was he
That he nolde graunten her asyng
For wepyng/ ne for fayre prayeng
And whan she herde hym werne her so
She had in hert so great wo
And tolke it in so great despyte
That she without more respyte
Was dred anon: but ere she deyde
Ful pitously to god she prayde
That proude herted Narcisus
That was in loue so daungerous
Right on a day ben hampred so
For loue/ and ben so hote for wo
That neuer he myght to ioye attayne
Than shulde he fele in euery vayne
What sorowe we trewe louers maken
That ben so vilaynously forsaken.

This prayer was but resonable
Therfore god helde it ferme & stable
For Narcisus shortly to tel
By auenture came to that wel
To rest him in the shadowyng
A day/whan he come from huntyng
This Narcisus had suffred paynes
For rennyng al day in the playnes
And was for thurst in great distresse
Of herte/ and of his werynesse
That had his brethe almost be nomen
Whan he was to that wel comen
That shadowed was with braunches grene
He thought of thilke water shene
To drinke/ and refresshe hym wele withal
And downe on knees he gan to fal
And forthe his necke and herd out stroughte
To drynke of that wel a draughte

And

And in the water anon was seene
His nose/his mouthe/his eyen sheene
And he therof was all abasshed
His owne shadowe had hym betrasshed
For wel wende he the fourme se
Of a chylde of great beaute
Well couthe lowe hym wrthe thó
Of daunger and of pride also
That Narcisus somtyme hym bere
He quytte hym wel his guerdon there
For he mused so in the well
That shortely the sothe to tell
He loued his owne shadowe so
That at laste he starfe for wo
For whan he sawe that he hys wyll
Might in no maner way fulfyll
And that he was so faste caught
That he hym couthe comforte naught
He loste his wytte/right in that place
And deyde within a lytell space
And thus his warysón he tóke
For the lady that he forsóke
Ladyes I praye ensample taketh
Ye that ayenst your lowe mistaketh
For if her dethe lie you to wyte
God can ful wel your whyle quyte.

Whan that this letre/ of whiche I tell
Had taught me that it was the welle
Of Narcisus in his beaute
I gan anon withdrawe me
Whan it fell in my remembraunce
That hym betyd suche mischaunce
But at the laste than thought I
That scathelesse/ful sykerly
I mygte vnto the welle go
Wherof shulde I abasshen so
Vnto the welle than went I me
And downe I louted for to se
The clere water in the stone
And eke the gravel/whiche that stone
Downe in the botome/as sylver fyne
For of the welle/this is the fyne
In worlde is none so clere of hewe
The water is euer fresshe and newe
That welneth vp/with waves bright
The mountenaunce of two fyngers hight
Aboute it is grasse spryngyng
For moyste so thycke and wel hydyng
That it ne may in wynter dye
No more than may the see be drye.
Downe at the botome set sawe I
Two crystall stones crastely
In myddle fresshe and fayre well
But o thyng sothly dare I tell
That ye wol holde a great merueyle
Whan it is tolde/withouten fayle
For whan the sonne clere in fyght
Caste in that welle his bemes bright
And that the heete descended is
Than taketh the crystall stone ywis
Agayne the sonne an hundred hewes
Blewe/yelowe/and reed that fresshe newe is
yet hath the meruaylous crystall
Suche strength/that the place ouer all
Both sonne and tree/and leues grene
And all the perde in it is sene
And for to don you to vnderstonde
To make ensample wol I fonde
Right as a myrrour openly
Sheweth al thyng that standeth therby
As wel the colour/as the fygure
Withouten any couerture
Right so the crystall stone shynyng
Withouten any discrepyng
The entrees of the perde accuseth
To hym that in the water museth
For euer in whiche halfe that ye be
ye may wel halfe the gardyne se
And if he turne/he may right wele
Sene the remenaunt euery dele
For there is none so lytel thyng
So hydde ne closed with shyttyng
That it ne is sene/as thought it were
Paynted in the crystall there
This is the myrrour perillus
In whiche the proude Narcisus
Sey al his fayre fare bright
That made hym suche to lye vpright
For who so lose in that myrrour
There maye nothyng hey his soroure
That he ne shal there se somthyng
That shal hym lede in to langhyng.
Ful many a worthy man hath it
pleent/ for folke of greatest wyt
Hey soone caught here and wapped

With

Withouten respyte ben they bayted
Here cometh to folke of newe rage
Here chaungeth many wyght corage
Here lythe no rede ne wytte therto
For Venus sonne/dan Cupido
Hath sowen there of loue the sede
That helpe ne lythe there none/ne rede
So cercleth it the welle aboute
His gynnes hath he set withoute
Right for to catche in his panters
These damoseles and bachelers
Loue wyl none other byde catche
Though he set eyther nette or latche
And for the sede that here was sowen
This welle is cleped/as wel is knowen
The welle of Loue/ of very right
Of whiche there hath ful many a wight
Spoken in bokes dyuersely
But they shul neuer so verily
Discripcion of the welle here
Ne elle the sothe of this matere
As ye shul/ whan I haue vndo
The crafte that her belongeth to.

ALl way me lyked for to dwell
To sene the chistall in the well
That shewed me ful openly
A thousande thynges fastе by
But I may say in sory houre
Stode I to lokey or to powre
For sythen I sore syghed
That Myrrour hath me nowe entrised
But had I first knowen in my wyt
The vertue and strengthes of it
I nolde not haue mused there
We had bette ben els where
For in the snare I fell anone
That had bytressed many one
In thylke Myrrour sawe I tho
Amonge a thousande thynges mo
A Roser charged ful of roses
That with an hedge aboute enclosed
Tho had I suche lyste and enuye
That for Pary ne for Paunye
Nolde I haue lefte to gone and se
There greatest heape of roses be
Whan I was with this rage hente
That caught hath many a man and shente
To warde the Roser gan I go
And when I was not ferre therfro
The sauour of the roses swote
We smote right to the herte rote
As I had al embaumed me
And if I ne had endonted me
To haue ben hated or assayled
Wy thankes wel I not haue sayled
To pull a rose of al that route
To bere in myn honde aboute
And smellen to it where I went
But euer I dredde me to repent
And lefte it greued or fulthought
The lorde that thilke gardyn wrought
Of roses there were great mone
So fayre ware neuer in Rome
Of knoppes close/some salwe I there
And some wel better wexen were
And some there ben of other moysor
That drowe nygh to her season
And spedde hem faste for to spredе
I loue wel suche roses rede
For brode roses/and open also
Ben passed in a day or two
But knoppes wyl fresshe be
Two dayes at lest/or els thre
The knoppes greatly lyked me
For sauerr may there no man se
Who so might haue one of all
Nought hym ben ful lefe withall
Wight I garlonde of hem grete
For no richesse I wolde it lete
Amonges the knoppes I chese one
So fayre/that of the remenaunt none
Ne preyse I halfe so wel as it
Whan I auyse in my wyt
For it so wel was enlumined
With colour rede/as wel semed
As nature couthe it make fayre
And it hath leaues wel foure payre
That shade hath set throughe hir knowyng
Aboute the redde roses springyng
The stalke was as tyssbe right
And theron stode the knoppe vpright
That it ne bowed vpon no syde
The swote smell sprongе so wyde
That it dyed al the place aboute
Whan I had smelled the sauour swote

No wyf had I fro thence yet go
But fomdele nere it went I tho
To take it/but myn honde for drede
Ne durfte I to the Rose bede
For thyflife sharpe of many maneres
Nettles/thornes/and hoked breres
For moche they defloureden me
For fore I dradde to harmed be.

The god of Loue/with bowe bent
That al day set had his talent
To purfue and to spyen me
Was stondyng by a sygge tree
And whan he sawe so me that I
Had chosen so entendisly
The botham mote into my paye
Than any other that I say
He toke an arowe/ful sharply whatte
And in his bowe whan it was sette
He straight vp to his eare drough
The stronge bowe/that was so tough
And shotte at me so wonder smerte
That through myn eye vnto myn herte
The takel smote/and depe it wente
And therwithal sudde colde me hente
That vnder clothes warme and soste
Sythen that day I haue chyuered ofte
Whan I was hurte thus in stounde
I fell downe platte vnto the grounde
Myn herte fayled/and faynted aye
And longe tyme in swoune I laye
But whan I came out of swoumyng
And had wytte/and my feleyng
I was al mate/and wende ful wele
Of bloode haue lome a ful great dele
But certes the arowe that in me stoode
Of me ne drewe no droppe of bloode
For why/I founde my woundes al drey
Than tobe I with myn hordes tweyn
The arowe/and ful faste it out pleyght
And in the pullyng fore I syghte
So at the laste the shafte of tree
I drough out/with the fetheres thre
But yet the hoked hed ylaft
The whiche Daunger called is
Gan so depe in myn herte pace
That I it might not arace
But in myn herte stylle abode
Al blodde I net a droppe of bloode
I was bothe anguysshous and troubly
For the perill that I sawe double
I nyste what to say or do
Ne get a lesse my woundes to
For neyther through grasse ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote
But to the bothom cure mo
Myn herte drewe/for al my wo
My thought was in none other thyng
For had it ben in my keping
It wolde haue brought my lyfe agayne
For certes euenly/I dare wel sayne
The sight onely/and the fauoure
Alegged moche of my langoure
Than gan I for to drawe me
Towarde the Bothom sayre to se
And Loue had get hym in his throwe
Another arowe in to his bowe
And for to shote gan hym dresse
The arowes name was Symplesse
And whan that Loue gan nygh me nere
He drowe it vp withouten were
And shotte at me with al his mygh
So that this arowe anon right
Throughout eygh as it was sounde
Iny to myn herte hath made a wounde
Than I anon dyd al my craft
For to drawen out the shafte
And therwithal I syghed efte
But in myn herte the hed was lefte
Whiche aye encreced my despit
Vnto the Bothom drowe I nere
And euermo that me was wo
The more despit had I to go
Vnto the Rose/where that growe
The freshe Bothom/so bright of hewe
Better me were to haue ben dede
But it behoued nede me
To don right as myn herte bade
For euer the body muste be lade
After the herte/in wele and wo
Of force togyder they muste go
But neuer this archer wolde fyne
To shote at me with al his pyne
And for to make me to him mete
The thirde arowe he gan to shete
Whan best his tyme he myght espye

The

The whiche was named Curtesye
In to myn herte it dyd auale
A swoune I fel/ bothe deed and pale
Longe tyme I lay/and stered nought
Tyl I abrayde out of my thought
And faste than I auysed me
To drawe out the shafte of tree
But euer the heed was lefte behynde
For aught I couthe pull or wynde
So sore it stycked whan I was hytte
That by no crafte I myght it flytte
But anguysshous and ful of thought
I lefte suche wo/my wounde ape wrought
That somoned me alway to go
Towarde the Rose/ that plesed me so
But I ne durste in no manere
Bycause the archer was so nere
For euermore gladly as I rede
Brent chylde of fyre hath moche drede
And certes yet for al my peyne
Though that I sygh/yet arowes reyne
And grounde quarels/sharpe of steele
Ne for no payne that I might fele
yet might I not my selfe with holde
The fayre Rose to beholde
For Loue me gaue suche hardyment
For to fulfyll his cõmaundement
Upon my fete I rose vp than
Feble/as a forwounded man
And forthe to gon might I sette
And for the archer nolde I lette
Towarde the Rose faste I drowe
But thornes sharpe/mo than ynowe
There were/and also thyckely thycke
And bicres bitwene for to pycke
That I ne myght get grace
The ronghe thornes for to pace
To sene the Roses freshe of hewe
I muste abyde/though it me rewe
The hedge aboute so thycke was
That closed the Roses in compas
But o thyng kyssed me right wele
I was so nyghe/I myght fele
Of the bothom the swote odoure
And also se the freshe colowre
And that right greatly kyssed me
That I so nere myght it se
Suche ioye anon therof had I
That I forgate my maladye
To sene I had suche delyte
Of sorowe and angre I was al quyte
And of my woundes that I had thoue
For no thyng kyssen me myght more
Than dwellen by the Roser aye
And thence neuer to passe awaye
But whan a whyle I had be there
The god of Loue/ whiche al to sharr
Wyn herte with his arowes kene
Lasteth him to yeue me woundes grene
He shotte at me ful hastely
An arowe named Lompany
The whiche takell is ful able
To make these ladyes mercyable
Than I anon gan chaungen hewe
For grenaunce of my wounde newe
That I agayne fel in swounyng
And syghed sore/in complaynyng
Sore I complayned that my loue
Oh me gan greuen more and more
I had non hope of allegraunce
So nygh I drowe to desperaunce
I roughte of deathe/ne of lyfe
Whether that loue wolde me dyse
If me a martyr wolde he make
I myght his power not forsake
And whyle for anger thus I woke
The god of Loue an arowe toke
Ful sharpe it was and pugnaunt
And it was called Fayre semblaunt
The whiche in no wyse wol consent
That any louer hym repente
To serue his loue/with herte and all
For any peryll that may befall
But though this arowe was kene grounde
As any rasour that is founde
To cutte and kerue at the poynte
The god of Loue it had anoynt
With a precious oynement
Semdele to yeue alegrement
Upon the woundes that he habe
Though the body in my herte inade
To helpe her sores/and to cure
And that they may the better endure
But yet this arowe/without more
Made in myn herte a large sore
That in ful great peyne I abode

Bul

But aye the ointement went aboute
Throughout my wounden large & wyde
It spredde about on every syde
Thorough whose vertue/and whose myght
Myn herte ioyful was and lyght
I had ben dede and al to shent
But for the precious ointement
The shafte I drowe out of the arowe
Rokyng for wo right wonder narowe
But the heed/whiche made me smerte
Lefte beh̄inde in myn herte
With other foure/I dare wel say
That neuer wol be take away
But the ointment holpe me wele
And yet suche sorowe dyd I fele
That al day I chaunged hewe
Of my woundes fresshe and newe
As men might se in my visage
The arowes were so ful of rage
So barbed/& so dentyfe
That men in euery syde might se
Bothe great anoye/and eke swetnesse
And hope meynt with bytternesse
Nowe were they rasp/nowe were they wood
In hem I felte bothe harme and good
Nowe sore without abreggement
Nowe softyng with oyntement
I softned here/and pitee hath there
Thus ease and angre togyther were.

The god of Loue hastyuely
Come lepande to me hastely
And sayd to me my great iape
yelde the/for thou may not escape
Thy no defence auayle the nowe
Therfore I rede make no bosaunce
If thou wolte yelde the shortely
Thou shalt rather haue mercy
He is a foole in ydernesse
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth/there that he shulde plese
In suche forpeyne hym self ese
Be meke/where thou muste nedes be
To serue aperi or ageynst thy pouste
Loue atones/and haue you
For I wol shewe it the so
Thou yelde the thus vnto me
And I assured ful shortely
Gladly sir/at your byddyng
I wol me yelde in al thyng
To your seruyce I wol me take
For god defende that I shulde make
Apert your byddyng resystence
I wol not don so great offence
For if I dyd/it were no syght
ye may do with me what ye wyll
Saue or spyll/and also slo
Fro you in no wyse may I go
Thy lyfe/my bethe/is in your honde
I may not fasle out of your honde
Playne at your lyste I yelde me
Hopyng in herte/that somtyme ye
Comforte and ese shul me sende
Or ese shortly/this is the ende
Without ony helthe/I mote aye dure
But if ye take me to your cure
Comforte or helthe/howe shulde I fare
Sythe ye me hurte/but ye me saue
The helthe of loue mote be founde
Where as they token first her wounde
And if ye lyst of me to make
your prisoner/I wol it take
Of herte and wyll fully at gre
Holy and playne I yelde me
Without feynyng or feyntyse
To be gouerned by your empryse
Of you I here so moche prise
I wol ben bolde at your deuyse
For to fulfyll your lykyng
And repentt for nothyng
Hopyng to haue yet in some tyde
Mercy/of that I abyde
And with that couenaunt yelde I me
Anon doune fyndyng vpon my kne
Proferyng for to kysse his fete
But for nothyng he wolde me lete.

And sayd/I saue the bothe and prise
Sens that thyn answere bothe me ese
For thou answered so curtisly
For no we I wote wel certesly
That thou art gentyl by thy speche
For thoughe a man serue wolde seche
He shulde not fynden in certayne
No suche answere of no vilayne
For suche a wordes ne myght nought

Isse out of a vylayns thought
Thou shalt not lesen of thy prise
For thy helpyng wost I rise
And eke encrese that I maye
But first I wol that thou obaye
Fully for thyn auauntage
Anon to do me here homage
And sythe kysse thou shalte my mouthe
Whiche to no vilayne was neuer couthe
For to aproche it/ne for to touche
For sause of cherles I ne douche
That they shal neuer neigh it nere
For curteys/and of fayre manere
Wel taught/and ful of gentylnysse
He muste ben/that shal me kysse
And also of ful hygh fraunchyse
That shal atteyne to that empryse
And first of o thyng warne I the
That payne and great aduersyte
He mote endure/and eke trauayle
That shal me serue/without fayle
But there agaynst the to comforte
And with thy seruyce to disporte
Thou mayst ful glad and ioyful be
So good a mayster to haue as me
And lorde of so hygh renoun
I beare of loue the Gonfenoun
Of Curtesy the banere
For I am of the selfe manere
Gentyll/ curteys/meke/and free
That who euer ententyfe be
Me to honoure/doute/and serue
And also that he hym obserue
Fro trespace and fro vilanye
And hym gouerne in curtesye
With wyll and with entencion
For whan he first in my prison
Is caught/than muste he bitterly
Fro thence forthe ful besyly
Laste hym gentyll for to be
If he desyre helpe of me
Anon without more delay
Withouten daunger or affray
I become his man anone
And gaue hym thankes many a one
And kneled downe with hondes ioynt
And made it in my porte ful quoynt
The ioye went to my hert rote
When I had kyssed his mouthe so swote
I hed suche myrthe and suche lykyng
It cured me of langwysshyng
He asked of me than hostages
I haue he sayd taken fele homages
Of one and other/where I haue ben
Disteyned ofte/withouten wene
Theese felons ful of falsyte
Haue many tymes begyled me
And through her falsshede her lyste ardaunt
Whereof I repent/and am agreued
And I hem get in my daungere
Her falsshede shal they bye ful dere
But for I loue the/I say the playne
I wol of the be more certayne
For the so sore I wol me bynde
That thou away ne shalt not wynde
For to denaye the couenaunt
Or done that is not auenaunt
That thou were false/it were great ruthe
Sythe thou semest so ful of trouthe
Sir/ if the lyst to vnderstande
I merueyle the asking thou demande
For why or wherfore shulde ye
Hostages or borowes aske of me
Or any other sykernesse
Sythe ye wot in soth fastnesse
That ye me haue suspused so
And holt myne herte taken me fro
That it wol do for me nothyng
But if it be at your byddyng
Myn herte is yours/a myn right nought
As it behoueth/in dede and thought
Redy in al to worche your wyll
Whether so turne it good or yll
So your it lusteth you to plese
No man therof may you disese
Ye haue theron setle suche ensyse
That it is werreyed in many wyse
And if ye doute it nolde obey
Ye may thryf do make a bey
And holde it with you for hostage
Now certes this is nowe outrage
(Quod Ioue) and sully I areede
For of the body he is ful sede
That hath the herte in his treasore
Outrage it were to aske more.

Tholy of his maunere he began
I spede me fer fertis panne
Whiche went of gentle poryssho thewe
And sayd to me with thys fey here
Thyne herte in no wise wol I shette
For al my to dwel soste and shette
I hyndre nother thy tytel fey
That no wight maye daye a wey
Thus seyde he sat of great poste
With whatesomeuer he towched me
Vnder the syde stel softely
That he myne herte sodainly
Without anoye hadde speered
That yet right nought it hath me deered
Whan he hadde done his wyl al out
And I had putte hym out of dout
Sir I sayd: I haue right great wyl
Your lyste and pleasure to fulfyl
Lose ye my seruyce take at gree
Of thalle faythe ye owe to me
I saye nought for vertreaunclyse
For I nought wolde of your seruyce
But the feruaunt trauerseth in vayne
That for to seruy bothe hys payne
Vnto that lorde: whiche in no wyse
Louue hym notwithstonde his seruyce.

Lvue sayde: dismay the nought
Syth thou for socour hast me sought
By thanke thy seruyce wol I take
And hyghe of degree I wol the make
If wyth oughte me hynder the
Out (as I hoope) it shal nought be
To worshyppe no wight by auenture
Maye come: but if he payne endure
Abyde and suffre thy distresse
That hurteth no we: it shal be lesse
I wotte my selfe what maye the saue
What medecyne thou wolde hauе
And of thy trouthe to me thou sepe
I shal vnto thyne helpyng cle
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene
Where so they be olde or grene
Thou shalte be holpen at wordes fewe
For certainly thou shalte wel sle we
Wete that thou seruest with good wyl
For to accomply myn and fulfyl
Thy comaundements the hope and vpryght
Wyche I to kepe am pure of right.

Ah sir for goddes loue (sayd I)
Be ye pitous hens entently
Your comaundements to me ye say
And I shal kepe hem if I may
For hem to kepen is al my thought
And if so be I hem kepe nought
Then maye I vnhappely
Wherfore I praye you entierly
With al myne herte: me to here
That I trespace in no maniere
The god of Loue than charged me
Anon: as ye shal here and se
Worde by worde: by right enquise
So as the Romaunt shal deuyse
The maister leseth his tyme to lere
Whan the disciple wol nat here
It is but payne on hym to swynke
That on his lernynge wol nat thynke
Who so luste loue: lette hym entende
For now the Romance begynneth to amende
Now is good to here my saye
If any be that canne it saye
And poynt it as the reason is
Sette for other gate pwis
It shal nat wel in al thyng
Be brought to good vnderstandyng
For a reder that poynteth pl
A good sentence maye ofte spyl
The bote is good at the endyng
Made of newe and lusty thyng
For who so wol the endyng here
The craste of loue he shal now lere
If that he wol so longe abyde
Tyl the Romance maye vnhyde
And vndo the signifiaunce
Of this derne my to Romaunce
The soth fasinesse that now is hydde
Without couerture shal be kydde
Whan I vndone haue this dremyng
Wherin no wordes of leasyng.

Vllanly at the begynnyng
I wol saye loue ouer al thyng
Thou leaue: if thou wolte be
False: and trespace ayenst me
I curse and blame generally
Al hem that louen villany
For villany maketh villayne

Last And

And by his dedes a chorle is seyne
These vilayns arne without ppts
Frendshyp/loue/and al bounte
I nyl receyue vnto my seruyce
Hem that ben vilayns of emprise
But vnderstonde in thyn entrnt
That this is not myn entendement
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentyl for his lynages
But who so is vertuous
And in his porte not outragous
Whan suche one thou seest the before
Though he be not gentyl bore
Thou mayste wel seyne this is in sothe
That he is gentyl/by cause he dothe
As longeth to a gentylman
Of hem none other deme I can
For certaynly withouten drede
A chorle is demed by his dede
Of hye or lowe/as ye may se
Or of what lynrede that he be
Ne say nought for none ruel wyll
Thyng that is to holden fyll
It is no worshyp to missey
Thou mayste ensample take of hey
That was somtyme for missayeng
Hated bothe of olde and yonge
As serre as Gaweyn the worthy
Was praysed for his curtesye
Kaye was hated/for he was felle
Of worde dispytous and cruell
Wherfore be wyse and aqueyntable
Goodly of worde/and resonable
Bothe to lesse and eke to mare
And whan thou comest there mey are
Loke that thou haue in custome aye
First to salue hem if thou may
And if it fall that of hem some
Salue the first/be not dome
But quyte hem curtesly anon
Without abydyng/er they gon
For nothyng eke thy tonge applye
To speke wordes of rybaudye
To vilayne speche/in no degre
Late neuer thy lyppe vnbounden be
For I nought holde hem in good fayth
Curteys that foule wordes sayth
And al womey serue and pryse
And to thy power hem honour reyse
And if that any missayere
Dispyse women/that thou ne reyse here
Blame him/and bydde him holde him styll
And sette thy nought/and al thy wyll
Women and ladyes for to plese
And to do thyng that may hem ese
That they euer speke good of the
For so thou mayste best praysed be
Loke fro pride thou kepe the ferre
For thou mayste bothe perysshe and fle
That pride is bothe folye and synne
And he that pride hath hym within
Ne may his herte in no wyse
Weben ne fourplen to seruyce
For pride is fownde in euery parte
Contrarye vnto louys arte
And he that loueth trewly
Shulde him contayne iolyly
Without pride in sondne wyse
And him disgysey in queynt wyse
For queynte aray/without drede
Is nothyng prayse/who taketh hede
For fresshe aray/as men may se
Without pride may ofte be
Aqueynte thy selfe after thy rent
Of robe and eke of garnement
For many sythe fayre clothyng
A man amendeth in moche thyng
And loke alwaye that they be shape
What garnement that thou shalte make
Of hym that can best do
With al that parteyneth therto
Poynctes and sleues be wel sittande
Right and strayght on the hande
Of shone and bootes/nether and seyne
Loke at the leest thou haue a payre
And that they sytte so fetously
That these rude may bytterly
Wenneple/sythe that they sytte so playne
Howe they renne ay or of agayne
Weare strayte gloues with aqueynte
Of sythe/and alway with good chere
Thou pleye if thou haue recheles
And if thou haue nought spende the lesse
Alway be merry/if thou may
But waste not thy good alway
Haue hertis of sleuyne/as fressh as May

The

Chapelet of Roses of Whitsonday
For fresshe araye ne cometh but fyte
Thyne hondes wasshe/ thy visage make white
And lette no slouthe vpon the lie
Thy mayden blowthe/ if thou mayst se
Doyde it away delyuerly
And dresse thyne herd right inhely
Farre not thy visage ny no wyse
For that of loue is not thempuse
For loue bothe hatey/ as I fynde
A beaute that cometh not of kynde
Alwaye in hert I rede the
Gladde and merry for to be
And be as ioyful as thou canne
Loue hath no ioye of sorouful manne
That pyne as ful of curtesy
That sno wroth ny his malady
For cuer of loue the sikenesse
Is medyne with swete and bytternesse
The sore of loue is meruayllous
For nowe the louer wepeth
Nowe can he playne/ nowe can he grone
Nowe can he syngen/ nowe he maken mone
To day he playneth for heuynesse
To morowe he playneth for lolynesse
The lyfe of loue is ful contrarye
Whiche stounde maist can ofte varye
But if thou canste mynthes make
That men in gre wol gladly take
Do it goodly/ I comaunde the
For men shulde where so euer they be
Do thynge that hem sitteth is
For therof cometh good loos and pris
Wherof that thou be vertuous
Se be not straunge ne daungerous
For if that thou good eyder be
Pitche gladly that men may se
In armes also if thou canne
Pursue tyl thou a name hast wonne
And if thy voyce be fayre and clere
Thou shalt make no great daungere
Whan to synge they goodly pray
It is thy worshyp for to obey
Also to pen it longeth aye
To harpe and gitterne/ daunce and playe
For if he can wel sote and daunce
It may hem greatly be auaunce
Daungere for thy lady sake
Songes and complaynte that thou make
For that wol meuen in her herte
Whan they reden of thy smerte
Loke that no man for scarce the holde
For that may greue the manyfolde
Reson wol that a louer be
In his pestes more large and fre
Than cholles that ben not of louyng
For who therof can any thyng
He shal be lefe aye for to pleue
In londes lore who so wolde leue
For he that throughe a sodayne sygte
Or for a syssyng anon ryght
pane hole his herte/ in wyl and thought
And to hym selfe bepeth right nought
After this swyfte/ it is good reson
He pene his good in abandon.

NOwe wol I shortly here reherce
Of that I haue sayd in herce
Al the sentence by and by
In wordes fewe compendously
That thou the better mayste on hem thynke
Whether so it be thou wake or wynke
For the wordes spiel greue
A man to hepe/ whan it is bleue
Who so with loue wol goy or ryde
He mote be curteys/ and hoyde of pride
Wery/ and ful of iolyte
And of largesse a loued be.

First I ioyne the here in penaunce
That euer without repentaunce
Thou set thy thought in thy louyng
To sasie without repentyng
And thanke vpon thy mythes swete
That shal sole we after whan ye mete.

And for thou trewe to loue shalt be
I wyl/ and comaunde the
That in one place thou set al hole
Thyn herte/ without halfen dole
For trecherye and fykernesse
For I loued neuer doubleneesse
To many hen seete that wol departe
Lurryche shal none but spiel parte
Out of hem herte I me right nought
That in one place setteth his thought

Lsi iii. Thes-

Therfore in o place it sette
And lette it neuer thens sliette
For if thou peuest it my lesyng
I holde it but a wretched thyng
Therfore peue it hole and quyte
And thou shalte haue the more merytte
If it be lent/ than after soone
The bounte and the thanke is done
But my Loue/ free peuen thyng
Requyreth a great guerdonyng
peue it my peste al quyte fully
And make thy gifte debonairly
For men that peste holde more dere
That peuen is with gladsome chere
That gifte nought to prayseth us
That man peueth maugre his
Whan thou hast peuen thyne hert (as I
haue sayde) the here openly
Than auentures shul the fal
Whiche harde and heuy ben with al
For ofte whan thou bethynkest the
Of thy louyng/ where so thou be
Fro folke thou must departe my hye
That none perceyue thy malady
But hyde thyne harme thou must alone
And go forthe sole/ and make thy mone
Thou shalte no whyle be my o state
But whylom colde and whilom hate
Now wexe as Rose/ now pale now fade
Suche sorowe I trowe thou neuer hade
Lotidien/ ne quarteyne
It is nat so ful of peyne
For ofteyn tymes it shal fal
My loue/ among thy payues al
That thou thy sense al holy
Forpeteyn shalte so vtterly
That many tymes thou shalte be
Styl as an ymage of tree
Domme as a stone/ without stiryng
Of fote or honde/ without speryng
Than soone after al thy payne
To memorye shalte thou come agayne
A many abasshed wonder sore
And after syghen more and more
For wytte thou wele without ieyne
In suche astate ful ofte haue bene
That haue the pusl of loue assayde
Wherthrough thou arte so dismayde.

After a thought shal take the so
That thy loue us to seruen fro
Thou shalte saye (god) what may this be
That I ne maye my lady se:
Myne herte alone is to her go
And I abyde al sole my wo
Departed fro myne owne thought
And with myne eyen se right nought
Alas myne eyen sene I ne may
My careful hert to comfay
Myne hertes gyde / but they be
I passe nothyng what euer they se
Shul they abyde than/ nay
But gone and vysyten without delay
That myne herte desyreth so
For certainly/ but if they go
A foole my selfe I maye wel holde
Whan I ne se what myne hert wolde
Wherfore I wol gone her to sene
Or cased shal I neuer bene
But I haue some tokenyng
Than goest thou forthe without dwellyng
But ofte thou sayest of thy desyre
Er thou mayst come her any nere
And wastest my vayne thy passage
Than fallest thou my a newe rage
For want of syght/ thou gynnest murne
And hom warde pensyfe thou dost returne
In great myschefe than shalte thou be
For than agayne shal come to the
Sighes and playntes with newe wo
That no tongue pursueth so
Who wote it nought/ he maye go lere
Of hem that byen loue so dere
No thynge thyne herte appesen maye
That ofte thou wolte gone and assaye
If thou mayst sene by auenture
Thy ladyes rose/ thyne hertes cure
So that by grace/ if thou myght
Attayne of her to haue a syght
Than shalte thou done none other dede
But with that syght thyne eyen fede
That sayne sikerlye whan thou mayst se
Thyne hert shal so rauysshed be
That neuer thou woldest thy thankes lese
Ne remoue/ for to se that swete
The more thou serst my sothfastnesse
The more thou conyest of that swetnesse

The

The more thyn herte bicometh in fyre
The more thyn herte is in desyre
For who conseyued with euery dele
It may be syker wonder wele
The payne of loue vnto a fere
For euermore thou nyghtest nere
Thought/or who so that it be
For very sothe I tel it the
The hatter euer shal thou bicome
As cyperyence shal the fenne
Where so comest in any coste
Who is nept fyre he bicometh moste
And yet forsothe for al thyn hete
Though thou for loue swelte and swete
Se for no thyng thou selen may
Thou shalt not wyllen to passe away
And though thou go/yet must he nede
Thynke al day on her fayre hede
Whom thou beheldest with so good wyll
And holde thy self begyled yll
That thou ne haddest none hardyment
To shewe her ought of thyn entent
Thyn herte ful sore thou wolte dispyse
And eke repente of cowardyse
That thou so dull in euery thyng
Were dome for drede/without spekyng
Thou shalt eke thynke thou dyddest solye
That thou were her so sadde bye
And durste not auntre the to say
Some thyng/er thou came away
For thou haddest no more wonne
To speke of her whan thou begonne
But yet she wolde for thy sake
In armes goodly the haue take
If shulde haue be more worthe to the
Than of tresour great plente
Thus shalte thou mourne and eke cõplayne
And get encheson to goy agayne
Onto thy wande/or to thy plere
Where thou beheldest her fleshly fare
And neuer for falce suspection
Thou woldest fynde occasyon
For to gone vnto her house
So arte thou than despreuse
A syght of her for to haue
If thou thyn hewen myghtest saue
Or any grande mayster make
Thyder/for thy leuen sake
Ful sayne thou woldest/but for drede
Thou gost not/lest that men take hede
Wherfore I rede in thy goynge
And also in thyn agayne cõmynge
Thou be wel ware that men ne wyt
Fayne the other cause than it
To go that wape/or faste bye
To heale wel is no folye
And if so be it happe the
That thou thy lone there mayste se
In syker wyse thou her salewe
Wherwith thy colourre wol transmewe
And eke thy blonde shal al to quake
Thy herte eke chaungen for her sake
But worde and wytte/with chere ful pale
Shul wante for to tel thy tale
And if thou mayste so ferforthe wynne
That thou reson durste begynne
And woldest sayne thre thynges or mo
Thou shalte ful scarsly sayne the two
Though thou bethynke the neuer so wele
Thou shalt forgete yet somdele.

But if thou deale with trecherye
For false louers mowe al folye
Sayne what hem lyste without dreede
They be so double in her falshede
For they in herte can thynke o thynge
And sayne another in her spekynge
And whan thy spethe is ended all
Right thus to the it shal befall
If any worde than come to mynde
That thou to sayne haste leste behynde
Than shalt thou bienne in great martyre
For thou shalt bienne as any fyre
This is the stryfe and eke the affraye
And the batell that lasteth aye
This bargayne ende may neuer take
But if that she thy peace wyl make
And whan the nyght is comen anon
A thousande angres shal come vpon
To bedde as faste thou woste the dyght
Where thou shalt haue but smal delyght
For whan thou wenest for to slepe
So ful of payne shalt thou crepe
Herte in thy bedde aboute ful wyde
And turne ful ofte on euery syde
Nowe do wel worde grosse is no me spright

And walowe in wo the longe nyght
Thyn armes shalt thou spurde a bedde
As many in werre were forwerede
Than shal the come a remembraunce
Of her shappe and her semblaunce
Wherto none other may be pere
And were thou wel without were
That the shal se sometyme that nyght
That thou hastie her/that is so bught
Naked bytwene thyn armes there
Al soth fastnesse as though it were
Thou shalte make castels than in Spayne
And dreme of ioy/al out of vayne
And the delyten of right nought
Whyle thou so slombrest in that thought
That is so swete and delytable
The whiche in sothe ys but a fable
For it ne shal no whyle laste
Than shalte thou syghe and wepe faste
And say dere god/what thyng is this
Myn dreme is turned al amys
Whiche was ful swete and apparent
But nowe I wake it is al shent
Nowe yede this mery thought away
Twenty tymes vpon a day
I wolde this thought wolde come agayne
For it alegeth wel my payne
It maketh me ful of ioyfull thought
It sleeth me that it lasteth nought
Ah lorde/why nyl ye me socoure?
The ioye I trowe that I langoure
The dethe I wolde me shulde slo
Whyle I lye in her armes two
Myn harme is harde withouten were
My great disease ful ofte I mene.

BVt wolde Loue do so I might
Haue fully ioye of her so bught
My payne were quytte me ryghtly
Alas to great a thyng aske I
It is but folye/and wronge wenyng
To aske so outragyous a thyng
And who so asketh folily
He mote be warned hastely
And I ne wote what I may say
I am so ferre out of the way
For I wolde haue ful great lesyng
And ful great ioy of lasse thyng
For wolde she of her gentylesse
Withouten more/me ones kesse
It were to me a great guerdon
Relese of al my passyon
But it is harde to come therto
Al is but folye that I do
So hygh I haue myn herte sette
Where I may no comfort gette
I wote not where I say wel or nought
But this I wote wel in my thought
That it were better of her alone
For to stynte my wo and mone
A love on her I caste goodly
That for to haue al utterly
Of ony other al hole the play
Ah lorde where I shal hyde the day
That euer she shal my lady be
He is ful cured/that may her se
A god/whan shal the dawnyng spring?
To syggen thus is an angry thyng
I haue no ioy thus here to lye
Whan that my loue is not me bye
A man to lyen hath great distresse
Whiche may not slepe/ne rest in ese
I wolde it dawed/and were nowe day
And that the nyght were went away
For were it day/I wolde vp ryse
Ah slowe sonne/shewe thyn empryse
Spede the to sparde thy bemes bught
And chace the derknesse of the nyght
To put away the stoundes stronge
Whiche in me lasten al to longe
The nyght shalt thou continue so
Without rest/in payne and wo
If euer thou fine we of loue distresse
Thou shal nowe lerne in that sickenesse
And thus endurying shalt thou lye
And ryse on nowe we vp erly
Out of thy bedde/and harneys the
Er euer dawnyng thou mayst se
Al prively than shalt thou gone
What whyder it be thy selfe alone
For reyne/or hayle/for snowe/for slete
Thyder she dwelleth/that is so swete
The whiche may fall a slepe be
And thynketh but lytel vpon the
Than shalt thou go/ful soule aferde
Lest the gate be vnsperde

And

And wayte without in woo and payne
Full pmel a rebell my wynde and vayne
Than shalt thou go the bote before
If thou mayste fynde any shore
Or hole/or reste/what euer it were
Than shalte thou stoupe/and lay to eere
If they within a sirpe be
Inwarde al saue thy lady free
Whom waiyng if thou mayst aspye
Go put thy selfe in superbye
To aske grace/and the hymme
That she may wete without wene
That thou nyghte no rest haste had
So sore for her thou were bestad
Women wel ought pite to take
Of hem that sowdwey for her sake
And loke for loue of that tryste
That thou thynke none other syke
For whan thou hast so great annoy
Shal lysse the er thou go awey
And holde that my ful great deynte
And for that no man shal the se
Before the house/ne in the way
Loke thou begyn agayne er day
Suche clymyng/and suche goyng
Suche hemynesse/and suche walkyng
Haseth louers withouten any wene
Vnder her clothes pale and lene
For Loue semith colour ne thynnesse
Who loueth trewe hath no fatnesse
Thou shalte wel by thy selfe se
That thou must nedes assayed be
For men that sayne hem other way
Falsely her ladyes for to betray
It is no wonder though they be fatte
With false othes her loues they gatte
For ofte I se suche losengeours
Fatter than Abbotes or priours
Yet with o thynge I the charge
That is to sayn/that thou be large
Vnto the mayde/that her dothe serue
So best her thanke thou shalt deserue
Pray her pytes/and get her grace
For so thou may thanke purchace
That she the wolde and se
Thy lady/and al that may the se
Also her seruauntes worshyp aye
And please as muche as thou may
Great good thought hem may come to the
Because that thou hem thy payne
They shal fyn eel house tyry the fambe
Curteys and wyse/and wel deande
And she that payne wel the meane
Loke out of londe thou be not sone
And if suche cause thou haue/that the
Behoueth to goon out of countre
Leaue hole thyn herte in hostage
Yet thou agayne make thy passage
Thynke longe to se the swete thyng
That hath thyn herte in her kepping
Now we haue I tolde the/in what wise
A louer shal do me seruyce
Do it than/if thou wolte haue
The mede/that thou after crane.

WHan Loue al this had badden me
I sayd him/sir how we may it be
That louers may in suche mancre
Endure the payn ye haue said here
I merualle me wonder faste
How we any man may lyue or laste
In suche payne/and suche bitternesse
In sorow we and thought/and suche sighyng
Aye burdened wo to make
Whether so it be they slepe or wake
In suche anoy contynuelly
As helpe me god this merualle I
How we man/but he were made of stele
Might lyue a monthe/suche payne to fele.

THe god of loue than sayd me
Frende/by the sayth I owe to the
May no man haue good/but he it bye
A man sourith more tenderlye
The thyng/that he hath bought most dere
For were thou wel without were
In thanke that thynge is taken more
For whiche a man hath suffred sore
Certes no wo ne may attayne
Vnto the sore of louers payne
Ne euel therto ne may amounte
No more than a man counte
The droppes that of the water be
For due as wel the great see
Thou myghtest/as the harmes tell
Of hem that with Loue dwell

In

In scrupte/ for peyne hem sleeth
And that eche may wolde slye the deth
And trowe they shulde neuer escape
Nere that hoope coueth hem awake
Gladde as many prisoner seke
And mape nat gruen for to eke
But barlye breed/ and water pure
And syeth in stremyn and in ordure
With al this yet comme he lyue
Good hope suche comforte hath hym yeue
Whiche maketh wene that he shal be
Delyuered and come to lyberte
In fortune is ful trust
Though he lye in straw or dust
In hoope is al his sustenaunce
And so for louers in her wenyng
Whiche loue hath shytte in his prisoun
Good hope is her saluacioun
Good hope (ho we sore that they smerte)
yeueth hem bothe wyl and herte
To profer her body to martyre
For hope so sore dothe hem desyre
To suffre eche harm that may deuyse
For hope that afterwarde shal aryse.

HOope in despyte catche victorie
In hoope of loue is al the glorie
For hoope is al that loue may yeue
Nere hoope/ there shulde no lenger lyue
Blessed be hoope/ whiche with despyte
Auaunceth louers in suche manyre
Good hope is cureyse for to please
To kepe louers from al disease
Hoope kepeth his fonde/ and wol abyde
For any peryll that may betyde
For hoope to louers/ as most chefe
Dothe hem endure al myschefe
Hoope is her helpe whan myster is
And I shal yeue the eke ywis
Thre other thynges/ that great solace
Dothe to hem that be in my lace
The first good thakmape be founde
To hem that in my lace be bounde
Is Swete thought/ for to recorde
Thyng wherwith thou canst accorde
Best in thyne herte/ where she be
Thynkyng in absence is good to the
Whan any louer dothe complayne
And syketh in distresse/ and in payne
Whan Swete thought shal come as blyue
Alwaye his angre for to depyue
It maketh louers to haue remembraunce
Of comforte/ and of hoothe plesaunce
That hoope hath sygne hym for to wyne
For thought anone than shal beginne
As ferre god wotte/ as he can fynde
To make a myrrour of his mynde
For to beholde he wol nat sette
Her persone he shal afore hym sette
Her laughyng eyen persaunt and clere
Her shappe/ her forme/ her goodly chere
Her mouthe/ that is so gracious
So swete/ and eke so sauerous
Of al her feyteres he shal take hede
His eyen with al her lymmes fede.

Thus Swete thynkyng shal aswage
The payne of louers/ and her rage
Thy hope shal double without gesse
Whan thou thynkest on her semelynesse
Or of her laughyng/ or of her chere
That to the made thy lady dere
This comforte wol I that thou take
And if the nepte thou wolte soufake
Whiche is nat lesse sauerous
Thou shalt nat ben to daungerous.

THe seconde shal be Swete speche
That hath to many one be leche
To bringe hem out of wo and werr
And helpe many a bachelere
And many a lady sent socour
That haue loued paramour
Thoughe spekyng/ whan they might here
Of her louers to hem so dere
To me it doydeth al her smerte
The whiche is closed in her herte
In herte it maketh hem glad and fayne
Speche whan they mowe haue sayne
And therfore nowe it cometh to mynde
In olde dawes as I fynde
That clerkes writen that her burne
There was a lady stresse of helme
Whiche of her loue made a songe
Dy him for to remembre amonge
In whiche she sayd/ whan that I here
Speken of him that is so dere

To

To me it bodeth al smerte
Lupe he sperth so nere myn herte
To speke of him at ene or morowe
It cumth me of al my sorowe
To me es nouht so hyge plesaunce
As of his person hol penaunce
Ihe wyste ful wel what I wrote sprynge
Comforteth in ful mochel thynge
Her loue she hath ful wel assayde
Of him she was ful wel apayde
In spite of hem her ioye was set
Therfore I rede the that thou get
A felowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counsayle/and wel hele
To whom go shewe holly thyn herte
Bothe wel and wo/hope and smerte
To gette comfort to him thou go
And priuely bytwene you two
Ye shal spelle of that goodly thynge
That hath thyn herte in her kepynge
Of her beaute and her semblaunce
And of her goodly countenaunce
Of al thy state/thou shalt him say
And after him counsayle how we thou may
Do any thyng that may her plese
For it to the shal be great ese
That he may wete thou trustes him so
Bothe of thy wele and of thy wo
And if his herte to loue be sette
His companye is mochel the bette
For Reson wol he shewe to the
Al bitterly his prunyte
And what she is he lourth so
To the playnly he shal bydde
Without drede of any shame
Bothe tel her renoune and her name
Than shal he further serue and nere
And namely to thy lady dere
In yther wyse ye curry other
Shal helpen as his owne brother
In trouthe without doublenesse
And kepen closet in sykernesse
For it is nedful thyng vn say
To haue a man thou darste say
Thy prime counsayle euery dele
For that wel counsaile the right wele
And thou shalt holde the wel apayed
Whan suche a frende thou hast assayed.

The thirde good of great comforte
That yeueth to louers mochel disporte
Loueth of syght and beholdyng
That stered us ofte wele lokyng
The whiche may none ese do
Whan thou arte ferre thy lady fro
Wherfore thou purse alway to be
In place/ where thou mayst her se
For it is thyng most amerous
Most delytable and sauerous
For to aswage a maines sorowe
To sene his lady by the morowe
For it is a ful noble thyng
Whan thyn eyen haue metyng
With that relyfe pierious
Wherof they be so desyrous
But al day after sothe it is
They haue no dieu to fatten a mys
They dieden neyther wynde ne rayne
Ne non other maner payne
For whan thyn eyen were thus in blysse
Pat of her curtesye pwysse
Alone they can not haue her ioye
But to the herte they conuoye
Parte of her blysse to him thou sende
Of al this harme to make an ende
The eye is a good messangere
Whiche can to the herte in suche maners
Tydynges sende/that hath sene
To bode him of his paynes clene
Wherof the herte triopseth so
That a great partye of his wo
Is boded/and put away to flyght
Right as the derkenesse of the nyght
Is chased with clerenesse of the moone
Right so is al his wo ful soone
Denoyded clene/whan that the syght
Beholden may that fresshe wight
That the herte desyreth so
That al his derkenesse is ago
For than the herte is al at ese
Whan they sene that may hem plese
Nowe haue I declared the al out
Of that thou were in drede and doute
For I haue tolde the faythfully
What the may eurey bitterly
And al soures that wol be
Faythful and ful of stedfaste

Good

Good hope alwaye bepe by thy syde
And swete thought make ese abyde
Swete Lokynge and swete Speche
Of al thyne harmes they shal be leche
Of every thou shalte haue great plesaunce
If thou canst byde in sufferaunce
And serue wel without fayntise
Thou shalte be quyte of thyne empuise
With more guerdon/ if that thou lyue
But al this tyme this I the peue.

The god of Loue whan al the day
Had tanzt me/ as ye haue herd say
And enfourmed compendously
He vanysshed awaye al sodaunly
And I alone lefte al soole
So ful of complaynt and of doole
For I sawe no man there me by
Wyth woundes me greued wonderly
Whe for to curen nothyng I knewe
Saue the bothom bught of hewe
Wheron was sette hooly my thought
Of other comforte knewe I nought
But it were through the god of Loue
I knewe nat ele to my behoue
That myght me ease or comforte gete
But if he wolde hym entermete
The roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without
As ye to fore haue herde me sayne
And fast I besped and wolde fayne
Haue passed the haye/ if I myght
Haue gotten in by any sleyght
Vnto the bothom so fayre to se
But euer I dradde blamed to be
If men wolde haue suspection
That I wolde of entention
Haue stole the Roses/ that there were
Therfore to entre I was in fere
But at the laste/ as I bethought
Whether I shulde passe or nought
I sawe come with a gladde chere
To me/ a lusty bachelere
Of good stature and of good height
And Bialacoil forsoth he height
Sonne he was to Curtesy
And he me graunted ful gladly
The passage of the litel hay
And sayd/ sir: sowe that ye may
Passe/ if your wyl be
The fresshe Roser for to se
And ye the swete sauour fele
Your warrans may right wele
So thou the kepe fro sorye
Shal no man do the vylanye
If I may helpe you in ought
I shal not sayne/ derbeth nought
For I am bounde to your seruyse
Fully deuoyde of feynyse
Than vnto Bialacoyl sayd I
I thanke you sir ful hertily
And your beheste take at gre
That ye so goodly profer me
To you it cometh of great fraunchyse
That ye me profer your seruyse
Than after ful delyuerly
Through the bierres anon went I
Wherof encombred was the haye
I was wel plesed/ the sothe to saye
To se the bothom/ fayre and swote
So fresshe spronge out of the rote.

And Bialacoyle me serued wele
Whan I so myghe me might fele
Of the bothom the swete odour
And so lusty hewed of colour
But than a choise/ fonle him betyde
Besyde the roses gay him hyde
To kepe the roses of that Roser
Of whom the name was Daungere
This choise was hyd there in the greues
Couered with grasse and with leues
To spye and take whom that he fonde
Vnto that Roser put an honde
He was not foole/ for there was mo
For with him were other two
Of wicked maners/ and euel fame
That one was cleped by his name
Wicked tonge/ god yeue him sorowe
For neyther at ene ne at morowe
He can of no man good speke
Of many a iuste man dothe he wreke
There was a woman ese that hyght
Shame/ that who can reken ryght
Dispare was her fathers name
Her mother Reson/ and thus was shame

Daunger

Thanne wept I hardy for to let
To Dalacoul howe me befel
Of Loue/ that sore and wounded me
And sayde/ Sir so mote I the
I hope no hope haue in no wyse
Vpon my syde/ but it ryse
Faulsithe (if I shal nat feyne)
My herte I haue had so great peyne
So great anoye and suche affraye
That I ne wotte what I shal saye
I drede your wrathe to deserue
Leuer me were/ that vnpuis serue
Wyth body shulde my peres smal
Thanne in any wyse it shulde fal
That ye wrathed shulde ben with me
Saye boldely thy wyl (quod he)
I nyl be wrothe if that I maye
For nought that thou shalte to me saye.

Thanne sayd I sir/ not you displease
To knowen of my great vnese
My wrathe only Loue hath me brought
For paynes great/ disese/ and thought
Fro day to day he dothe me dure
Suppose it nat sir/ that I syke
In me fyue woundes dyd he make
The sore of whiche shal neuer slake
But ye the bothom graunt me
Whiche is moste passaunt of beaute
My lyfe/ my dethe/ and my martyre
And tresour/ that I most desyre
Thanne Dalacoul affrayde all
Sayd sir/ it may not fall
That ye desyre it may not aryse
What wolde ye shende me in this wyse?
A moked foole than I were
If I suffred you away to bere
The fresshe bothom/ so fayre of syght
For it were neyther fyll ne right
Of the Roser ye bioke the ryude
Or take the rose afore his tyude
Ye are not custeys to ase it
Let it stylle on the Roser syt
And lette it growe tyl it amended be
And parfetly come to beaute
I nolde not that it pulled were
Fro the Roser that it bere
To me it is so lefe and dere

With that anon sterte out Daungere
Out of the place where he was hyde
His malyce in his chere was hyde
Ful great he was and starke of herne
Sturdy and hydous/ who so him sherne
Lyke shaupe bitwene his herte was growe
His eyen tred sparklyng as the fyre glowe
His nose frounced ful grysly stode
He come cryande as he were woode
And sayd/ Bialacoyl tel me why
Thou bringest hyder so boldely
Him that so nyghe the Rosere
Thou worchest ny a wronge manere
He thynketh to dishonour the
Thou arte wel worthy to haue maugre
To lette hym of the rosere wytte
Who seruyth a seloune is yuel quytte
Thou woldest haue done great bounte
And he with shame wolde quyte the
Flyt hence felowe/ I rede the go
It wanteth lytel he wol the slo
For Bialacoyl ne kne we the nought
Whan the to serue he sette his thought
For thou wolte shame him/ if thou myght
Bothe agayne reason and right
I wol no more in the affye
That cornest so slyghly for tespy
For it prouyth wonder wele
Thy sleight and trayson euery dele
I durst no more make there abode
For the chorle/ he was so wode
So gamme he thrette and manace
And through the haye he dyd me chace
For feare of him I tremblyd and quoke
So choplisshly his herd he shoke
And sayd/ if este he myght me take
I shulde nat from his handes scape
Than Bialacoil is sledde and mate
And I al soole disconsolate
Was lefte alone in payne and thought
For shame to dethe I was nygh brought
Than thought I on my sighe soly
How we that my body vtterly
Was yeue to payne and to martyre
And therto hadde I so great yre
That I ne durst the hayes passe
There was no hoope/ there was no grace
I trowe neuer may wyfte of payne
But he were laced in lasses chayne
Ne no man/ and sothe it is
But if he loue/ what angre is
Loue holdeth him hymselfe ryght wele
Whan payne (he sayth) I fele
No herte maye thynke/ ne tonge sayne
A quarter of my two aduersayne
I myght not with the angre last
Myne herte in poynt was for to brast
Whan I thought on the rose/ that so
Was through Daungere fro me
A longe whyle stoode I my selfe
Tyl that me sawe so maddy and mate
The lady of the hyghe warde
Whiche from her to me sodenly thider went.

Reason men clepe that lady
Whiche from her toure delyuerly
Come downe to me without more
But she was neyther yonge ne hore
Ne hygh ne lowe/ ne fatte ne leane
But best/ as it were my a weene
Her eyen two were clere and fyght
As any candell/ that brenneth bryght
And on her herd she had a crowne
Her semed wel an hyght person
For rounde enuyron her crowne
Was ful of tyche flames feet
Her goodly semblaunt by deuyse
I trowe was made in paradyse
For nature had neuer suche a grace
To forge a werke of suche compace
For certeyne/ but if the letter lye
God him selfe/ that is so hye
Made her after his ymage
And pase her sythe suche auauntage
That she hath myght and seignorie
To kepe men from al folye
Who so wel trowe her lore
Ne may offenden neuermore.

And whyle I stode this derke and pale
Reson began to me her tale
She sayde/ Alhayle my sweete frende
Foly and childhode wel the shende
Whiche the haue put in great affray
Thou hast bought dere the tyme of May
That made thyn herte merry to be

In yuel tyme thou wentest to se
The gardyn/ where-of pleasaunce
Dant the feyre and mas maystresse
Whan thou pleydest in the daunce
With her and hyr aqueyntaunce
For aqueyntaunce is perylloous
Fyrst foste/ and after noyous
She hath trayssed without wene
The god of Loue habbe the nat sene
He had Resonnesse the conueyde
In the verger/ where thy pryche hym pleyde
If folly haue supprised the
Do so that it recouered be
And be wel ware to take no more
Counsayle/ that greueth after sore
Be wyse/ that wol hym selfe chastyse
And though a ponge man in any wyse
Trespasse amonge/ and do folly
Lete hym nat tary/ but hastely
Lete hym amende what so be mys
And ese I counsayle the yuain
The god of Loue holly forgete
That hath the in suche payne sette
And the in herte tourmented so
I say nat sene ho we thou mayst go
Other wayes to gary soun
For Daunger/ that is so felonn
Fully purposeth the to werry
Whyche is ful cruel the sothe to sey.

ANd yet of Daungere roueth no blame
In rewarde of my doughter Shame
Whyche hath the Roses in her warde
As she that maye be no vnfarde
And wicked tonge is with these two
That suffreth no man thyder go
For ere a thynge be do he shal
Where that he roueth ouer al
In fourty places/ if it be sought
Any thyng that neuer was boy ne Wrought
So woche trayson is in hym make
Of falsnesse for to fayne a tale
Thou deseyst with angry folke yuain
Therfore to the better is
From these folke alwaye to fare
For they wol make the spare thy eare
Who is the fool that loue they cal
Whom thou in but folye al

For loue is folly euery dell
Who loueth/ in no wyse maye do wel
Ne sette his thought on no good werke
His schoole he leseth/ if he be a clerke
Or other crafte ese/ if that he be
He shal nat thryue therin/ for he
Thy loue shal haue more passyon
Than Monke/ hermyte/ or chanoun
This payne is herde out of measure
The ioye maye ese no whyle endure
And in the possessyon
Is moche tryboulacyon
The ioye it is so shorte lastynge
And but in happe is the gettynge
For I se there many in trauayle
That at laste foule fayle
I was nothyng thy counsayler
Whan thou were made the homager
Of god of Loue to hastely
There was no wysdom but foly
Thyn herte was iolyf/ but nat sage
Whan thou were brought in suche a rage
To yelde the so redily
And to Loue of his great maystry.

I Rede the loue away to dryue
That maketh the reche not of thy lyue
The foly more fro day to day
Shal growe/ but thou it put away
Take with thy teethe the bridel fast
To daunte thyn herte/ and ese the cast
If that thou mayst to get the defence
For to redresse thy first offence
Who so his herte alway wol kepe
Shal fynde amonge that shal hym greue.

Whan I her herde thus me chastyse
I answerde in ful angry wyse
I prayde her cesse of her spreche
Eyther to chastyse me or teche
To bydde me my thought refreyne
Whyche Loue hath caught in his demeyne
What went ye Loue wol consente
(That me assayleth with bowe bente)
To draw me myn herte out of his honde
Whyche is so quickly in his honde
That ye counsayle may neuer be
For whan he first arrested me

He tolde myne herte so sore him tyll
That it is nothyng at my wyll
He thought it so hym for to obey
That he it sparred with a key
I pray you let me be al styll
For ye may wel/if that ye wyll
your wordes waste in ydelnesse
For vtterly/withouten gesse
Al that ye sayne is but in vayne
Me were leuer dye in the payne
Than Loue to me warde shulde aretten
Falshede or treson on me setten
I wol me get pris or blame
And loue trewe to saue my name
Who that me chastyseth/I him hate
With that worde Reson went her gate
Whan she sawe for no sermonyng
She myght me fro my foly bring
Than dismayed I leste al soole
For werry/for wandred as a soole
For I ne knewe no cherysaunce
Than sel in to my remembraunce
Howe Loue bade me to purueye
A felowe/to whom I might sey
My counsell and my priuyte
For that shulde moche auayle me
With that bethought I me/that I
Had a felowe fast by
Trewe and syker/curteys/and hende
And he was called by name a frende
A trewer felowe was no where non
In haste to him I went anon
And to him al my wo I tolde
Fro him right nought I wolde withholde
I tolde him al without were
And made my complaynt on Daungere
Howe for to se he was hydous
And to me warde contrarious
The whiche through his cruelte
Was in poynte to haue meymed me
With Dialacoul whan he me sey
Within the gardyn walke and play
Fro me he made him for to go
And I beleste alone in wo
I durste no lenger with him speke
For Daunger sayde he wolde be wreke
Whan that he sawe howe I wente
The fresshe bothom for to hente
If I were hardy to come nere
Vpt wene the hay and the Roserr.

This frende whan he wyst of my thought
He discomforted me right nought
But sayd felowe/be not so madde
Ne so abasshed nor bestadde
My selfe I knowe ful wel Daungere
And howe he is fiers of chere
At prime temps/sone to manace
Ful ofte I haue ben in his case
A felon first though that he be
After thou shalt him souple se
Of longe passed I knewe him wele
Vngoodly first though men him fele
He wol meke after in his bearynge
Ben/for scrupre and obeysynge
I shal the tel what thou shalt do
Meekely I rede thou go him to
Of herte pray him specially
Of thy trespace to haue mercy
And hote him wel here to plese
That thou shalte neuer more him displese
Who can best serue of flatery
Shal plese Daunger moste vtterly.

My frende hath sayd to me so wele
That he me eased hath somdele
And eke alegged of my turment
For through him had I hardement
Agayne to Daunger for to go
To preue if I myght meke him so.

TO Daunger came I al a shamed
The whiche afome me had blamed
Despying for to pese my wo
But ouer hedge durste I not go
For he forbode me the passage
I founde him cruel in his rage
And in his honde a great burdon
To him I lutled lowe adon
Ful meke of porte/and symple of chere
And sayd sir/I am comen here
Onely to aske of you mercy
That greueth me ful greatly
That euer my syse I wrathed you
But for to amenden I am come now
With al my might/bothe soule and flyll

To done right at your owne wyll
For Loue made me for to do
That I haue trespassed hereto
Fro whom I ne maye withdraw myne hert
yet shal I neuer for to ye ne smert
(What so befal good or il)
Offende more agayne your wyll
Leuer I haue endure disease
Than do that shulde you displease.

I You requyre/ and praye that ye
Of me haue mercy and pyte
To stynt your yre/that greueth so
That I wol swere for euer mo
To be redressed at your lykyng
yf I trespasse in any thyng
Saue that (I praye the) graunt me
A thynge/ that maye not warned be
That I maye loue al onely
None other thynge of you aske I
I shal done al wel ynow
yf of your grace ye graunt me this
And ye maye not letten me
For wel wote ye/that loue is free
And I shal sowen surlye that I wyll
Who euer lyke it wel or yl
And yet ne wolde I for al Fraunce
Do thynge to do you displesaunce.

Than Daungere fyl in his entent
For to forgeue his male talent
But al his wrathe yet at last
He hath released/ I prayde so fast
Shortely (he sayd) thy requeste
Is nat to moche dishoneste
Ne I wol nat werne it the
For yet nothynge engreueth me
For though thou haue thus euermore
To me is neither softe ne sore
Loue where that the lyst/what retcheth me
So serue fro my Roses be
Trust nat on me for none assaye
In any tyme to passe the haye
Thus hath he graunted my prayere
Than went I forthe withouten were
Unto my frende/ and tolde hym al
Whiche was right wyfful of my tale
(He sayd) no we gotte wel thyne assaye
He shal to the be debonayre
Thoughe he afore was dispitous
He shal hereafter be gracious
If he were touched on some good vayne
He shulde yet rewen on thy peyne
Suffre I rede/ and no boost make
Lyt thou at good mes mayst hym take
By sufferaunce/ and wordes softe
A may maye ouercome ofte
Hym/ that afore he had in drede
In vaines sothely as I rede
Thus hath my frende with great comforte
Anounced me with high disporte
Whiche wolde me good/as moche as I
And than anone ful sodainly
I tose my scaue/ and strayght I went
Unto the haye/for great talent
I hadde to sene the fresshe bothom
Wherin laye my saluation
And Daungere tose kepe/ yf that I
Kepe hym couenaunt trewly
So sore I dradde his manasyng
I durste nat breke his byddyng
For lest that I were of hym shent
I brake nat his cõmaundement
For to purchase his good wyll
It was for to come there tyl
His mercy was to serue behynde
I wepte/ for I ne myght it fynde
I complayned and sighed sore
And sanguyssched euermore
For I durst nat ouer go
Unto the Rose I loued so
Throughout my bemyng bitterly
That he had vno wiege certainly
Than Loue me ladde in surthe a wyse
That in me there was no feyntise
Falsshed/ ne no trechery
And yet he ful of villany
Of disdayne/ and cruelte
Dyd me ne wolde haue pyte
His cruel wyl for to refrayne
Tho I wepte al waye/and me complayne
And while I was in this tourment
Were come of grace/by god sent
Fraunchise/ and with her Pyte
Fulsylde the bothom of Sounte
They go to Daungere anon ryght

To fortherme with al her myght
And helpe my worde and my dede
For wel they sawe that it was nede
First of her grace dame Fraunchise
Hath taken of this empuse
She sayd/ Daungere great wronge ye do
To worche this may so moche wo
Or pynen hym so angerly
It is to you great villany
I canne nat se/ why ne how
That he hath trespassed agayne you
Saue that he loueth/ wherfore ye shulde
The more my cherte of hym holde
The force of loue maketh hym do this
Who wolde hym blame he dyd amys
He leseth more than ye maye do
His payne is harde/ ye maye se so
And Loue in no wyse wolde consent
That ye haue power to repent
For though that quicke ye wolde him slo
Fro loue his herte may nat go
Nowe I wete sir/ it is your ease
Him for to angre or disease
Alas/ what maye it you auaunce
To done to him so great greuaunce
What worshippe is it agayne hym take
Or ony your may a werre make
Sithe he so lowly euery wyse:
Is redy/ as ye luste deuyse
If Loue haue caught him in his lace
You for to bey in euery caas
And bey your subiecte at your wyl
Shulde ye therfore wyllen hym yl
Ye shulde him spare more al out
Than hym that is bothe proude and stout
Curtesy wol that ye socure
Hem/ that bey meke vnder your cure
His hert is harde that wol nat meke
Whan men of mekenesse him beseke.

This is certayne/ sayd Pyte
We se ofte that humylyte
Bothe pre/ and also felony
Venquysheth/ and also melancoly
To stonde forthe in suche durresse
This cruelte and wickednesse
Wherfore I pray you sir Daungere
For to mayntene no lenger here
Suche cruel werre agayne your may
As holly yours as ever he can
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
Vpon this caytife/ that langryssheth so
Whiche wol no more to you trespace
But put him holly in your grace
His offence me was but syte
The god of Loue it was to wyte
That he your thrall so greatly is
And if ye harme him ye done amys
For he hath had ful harde penaunce
Syth that ye rette him thaqueyntaunce
Of Dialacoil/ his moste hope
Whiche al his paynes might acope
He was before anoyed sore
But than ye doubled him wel more
For he of dysse hath ben ful bare
Sythe Dialacoil was fro hym fare
Loue hath to hym great distresse
He hath no nede of more durresse
Voydeth from him your pre I rede
ye may not wynnen in this dede
Waketh Dialacoil repayre agayne
And haueth pyte vpon his payne
For I rayneshyse wol/ and I Pyte
That mercyful to him ye be
And sythe that she and I accorde
Haue vpon him mersicorde
For I you pray/ and eke moneste
Nought to refusen our requeste
For he is harde/ and sek of thought
That for vs two wol do right nought
Daunger ne might no more endure
He meued him vnto mesure.

I wol in no wyse/ sayth Daungere
Deuy/ that ye haue abed here
It were to great vncurtesye
I wol ye haue the companye
Of Dialacoil/ as ye deuyse
I wol him let in no wyse
To Dialacoil than went in hye
Fraunchise/ and sayd ful curteisye
Ye haue to longe be daignous
Vnto this louer/ and daungerous
Fro him to withdraw your presence
Whiche hath do to him great offence
That ye not wolde vpon him se

Wherfore a sorowful man is he
Shape ye to paye him/ and to please
Of my lone if ye wol haue ease
Fulfyl his wyl/ sithe that ye knowe
Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
Through helpe of me and of Pyte
you dare no more aferde be
I shal do right as ye wyl
Hath Dialacoil/ for it is syl
Sithe Daunger wol that it so be
Thay Fraunchise hath him sent to me.

DIalacoil at the begynnyng
Salued me in his comyng
No straungenesse was in him sene
No more than he me had weathed bene
As fayer semblaunt than she wed he me
And goodly/ as aforne dyd he
And vp the houde without doute
Within the haye right al about
He ladde me with right good chere
Al enuyron the vergere
That Daunger hadde me chased fro
Nowe haue I leaue ouer al to go
Nowe am I raysed at my deuyse
Fro hel vnto paradyse
Thus Dialacoil of gentylnesse
With al his payne and besynesse
Hath shewed me ouerly of grace
The estres of the swote place
I sawe the Rose whan I was nygh
Was greater wonder/ and more high
Fresshe/ roddy/ and fayer of hewe
Of colours euer ylyche newe
And whan I hadde it longe sene
I sawe that through the leues grene
The Rose spradde to spaunysshinge
To sene it was a goodly thynge
But it ne was so spradde an vnder
That men within myght knowe the fyre
For it couert was and close
Bothe with the leues and with the rose
The stalke was euen and grene vpright
It was theron a goodly syght
And wel the better without wene
For the seed was nat sene
Ful fayre it stoat de the god of blysse
For suche another/ as Ageesse
Afore ne was ne more Bermayne
I was abawed for maruayle
For euer the fayer that it was
The more I am bounden my loues laas
Longe I abode there sothe to saye
Tyl Dialacoil I ganne to praye
Whan that I sawe him in no wyse
To me warnen his seruyce
That he me wolde graunt a thynge
Whiche to remembre is wel sittynge
This is to sayne/ that of his grace
He wolde me yeue leyser and space
To me that was so desyrous
To haue a sysynge precious
Of the goodly fresshe Rose
That so swetely smelleth in my nose
For if it you displeased nought
I wolde gladly/ as I haue sought
Haue a cosse therof freely
Of your yefte/ for certainly
I wol none haue/ but by your leue
So sothe me were you for to greue

HE sayd/ frende so god me spede
Of Chastite I haue suche drede
Thou shuldest nat warned be for me
But I dare nat for Chastyte
Agayne her dare I nat mysdo
For alwaye byddeth she me so
To yeue no louer leaue to kysse
For who therto maye wynnen ywisse
He of the surplus of the praye
Wyl lyse in hoope to gette some daye
For who so kysseynge maye attayne
Of loues payne hath (sothe to sayne)
The best and most auenaunt
And ernest of the remenaunt.

OF his answere I sighed sore
I durst assaye him tho no more
I hadde suche drede to greue him aye
A man shulde nat to moche assaye
To chase his frende out of measure
Nor putte his lyfe in auenture
For no man at the first stroke
Ne maye nat fel downe an oke
Nor of the vryspus haue the wyne
Ne grapes be ripe and wel a tyme

Be sore empressed/I you ensure
And drawen out of the pressure
But I forpeyned wonder stronge
Though that I abode right longe
After the lysse/ in payne and wo
Sithe I to lysse despired so
Tyl that remurynge on my distresse
There come Venus the goddesse
(Whiche ape werrpeth Chastite)
Came of her grace to socour me
Whose myght is knowe ferre and wyde
For she is mother of Luppde.

THe god of Loue/ blynde as stone
That helpeth louers many one
This lady brought in her right honde
Of brennynge fyre a blasyng bronde
Wherof the flame and hote fyre
Hath many a lady in desyre
Of Loue brought/ and sore hette
And in her seruyce her hert is sette
This lady was of good entayle
Right wonderful of apparayle
By her atyre so bright and shene
Men myght perceyue wel and sene
She was nat of Relygioun
Nor I nyl make mencioun
Nor of robe/ nor of tresour
Of broche/ neither of her riche attour
Ne of her gyrdel about her syde
For that I nyl nat longe abyde
But knoweth wel/ that certainly
She was arrayed richely
Denoyde of pride certayne she was
To Bialacoil she went a pas
And to hym shortely in a clause
She sayd/ sir: what is the cause
Ye ben of porte so daungerous
Vnto this louer/ and daynous
To graunt him nothyng but a lysse
To warne it him ye done amysse
Sithe wel ye wotte/ howe that he
Is loues seruaunt/ as ye maye se
And hath beaute/ wherthrough is
Worthy of loue to haue the blys
Howe he is semely beholde and se
Howe he is fayre/ howe he is free
Howe he is swote/ and debonayre
Of age yonge/ lusty/ and fayre
There is no lady so hautayne
Duchesse/ countesse/ ne chastelayne
That I nolde holde her vngoodly
For to refuse him vtterly
His brethe is also good and swete
And eke his lyppes roddy and mete
Onely to playne/ and to lysse
Graunt him a lysse of gentylnysse
His teth arne also white and clene
Me thynketh wronge without ony wene
If ye nowe warne him/ trusteth me
To graunt that a lysse haue he
The lasse ye helpe him that ye haste
And the more tyme shul ye waste
Whan the flame of the very bronde
That Venus brought in her right honde
Hadde Bialacoil with his hete smete
Anone he badde me withouten lete
Graunt to me the rose lysse
Than of my payne I ganne to lysse
And to the rose anone went I
And lysse it ful faithfully
There nede no man aske/ if I was blythe
Whan the sauour soste and lythe
Stroke to myne hert without more
And me allegged of my sore
So was I ful of ioye and blysse
It is fayre suche a flour to lysse
It was so swote and sauerous
I myght nat be so angurysshous
That I mote gladde and ioly be
Whan that I remembre me
Yet euer amonge sothly to sayne
I suffre noye and moche payne.

THe see may neuer be so styl
That with a tytel wynde at wyl
Quer wheline and tourne also
As it were woode in wawes go
After the calme the trouble sonne
Mote folowe/ and chaunge as the moone
Right so farith Loue/ that selde in one
Holdeth his ancre/ for right anone
Whan they in ease wene best to lyue
They ben with tempest al fordryue
Who serueth Loue/ canne tel of wo
The stormy dredes he mote ouergo

Lest

Nowe he hasteth/and nowe he curreth
For felde ay o poynte soure enderneth.

Nowe is it right me to procede
Howe Shame gan nerde and take hede
Through whom sel angres I haue hade
And howe the stronge walle was made
And the castell of borde and length
That god of Loue wan with his strength
At this my Romance wyll I sette
And for no thyng me wyll I lette
So that it spedyng to her be
That is the flour of beaute
For she may best my labour quyte
That I for her loue shal endyte
Wicked tonge that the coueyte
Of euery louer can deuyse
Worste/and addeth more fondele
(For wicked tonge sayth neuer wele)
To me warde bare he right great hate
Espyeng me erly and late
Tyl he hath sene the great there
Of Dialacoil and me yfere
He might not his tonge withstonde
Worse to reporte than he fonde
He was so ful of cursed rage
It satte hym wele of his lynage
For hym an Iuisshe woman bare
His tonge was syled sharpe and square
Poignaunt and right seruyng
And wonder bytter in spekyng
For whan that he me gan espye
He swore (affirmyng sperely)
Betwene Dialacoil and me
Was ynel aquayntaunce and pime
He spake therof so folisye
That he awaked Ielousye
Whiche al afrayde in his rysyng
Whan that he herde iangelyng
He ran anon as he were wode
To Dialacoil there that he stode
Whiche had leuer in this caas
Haue ben at Repues or Ampas
For soote sote in his selempe
To hym thus sayd Ielousye
Why haste thou ben so negligent
To kepen/whan I was absent
Thy berger here left my thy wardes

To me thou haddest no regarde
To truste (to thy confusyon)
Hym thus/to whom suspection
I haue right great/for it is nede
It is wel shewed by the dede
Great faute in the nowe haue I founde
By god anone thou shalte be bounde
And faste losen in a toure
Without refuyte or socoure.

HOr shame to longe hath be the fro
Ouer soone she was ago
Whan ye hast lost bothe diede & fere
It semed wel she was nat here
She was besy in no wyse
To kepe the and chastice
And for to helpen Chastite
To kepe the Roser/as thynketh me
For than this boye knaue so bolde
Ne shulde nat haue be hardy
In this verge hadde suche game
Whiche nowe me tourneth to great shame.

DIalacoil nyst what to saye
Ful fayne he wolde haue fledde away
For feare haue hydde/nere that he
Al sodainly tolde him with me
And whan I sawe he had so
Thus Ielousye take vs two
I was astoned/and knewe no rede
But fledde away for very diede.

Than Shame came forthe ful symply
She wende haue trespaced ful greatly
Humble of her porte/and made it symple
Wearyng a vayle in stede of wymple
As nonnes done in her abbey
By cause her herte was in affray
She gan to speke within a throwe
To Ielousye/right wonder lowe
First of his grace she besought
And sayd sir/me leueth nought
Wicked tonge/that false espye
Whiche is so glad to fayne and lye
He hath you made through flatering
Dy Dialacoil a false leasyng
His falsnesse is not vnknowe a newe
It is to longe that he hym knewe

This

This is not the first daye
For wicked tonge hath custome aye
Yonge folkes to bewrye
And false lesynges on hem lye.

Yet neuertheless I se amonge
That the lougne it is so longe
Of Bialacoil/ hertes to lure
In loues seruyce for to endure
Drawyng suche folke him to
That he hath nothyng with to do
But in sothnesse I trowe nought
That Bialacoil had euer in thought
To do trespace or vilanye
But for his mother Curtesye
Hath taught him euer to be
Good of aqueyntaunce and priue
For he loueth none heynesse
But mirthe and play/ and al gladnesse
He hateth al trechours
Soleyne folke and enuyous
For ye weten how we that he
Wol euer glad and ioyful be
Honestly with folke to ley
I haue be negligent in good fey
To chastyse him/ therfore now I
Of herte I crye you here mercy
That I haue ben so recheles
To tamen hym withouten lees
Of my folye I me repente
Nowe wol I hole set myn entente
To kepe bothe lowe and stylle
Bialacoil to do your wylle
Shame Shame (sayd Jelousy)
To be bytrasshed great drede haue I
Lecherye hath clombe so hye
That almoste blered is myn eye
No wonder is/ if that drede haue I
Ouer al reigneth lechery
Whose myght groweth nyght and dey
Bothe in cloyster and in abbey
Chastyte is werreyed ouer all
Therfore I wol with sydes wall
Close bothe rôses and rosere
I haue to long in this manere
Leste hem vnclosed wylfully
Wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorouful/ and repente me
But nowe they shal no lenger be
Vnclosed/ and yet I drede sore
I shal repent ferthermore
For the game gothe al amys
Counsayle I must nedes crys
I haue to longe trusted the
But nowe it shal no lenger be
For he may best in euery cost
Discryue/ that men trustyn moste
I se wel that I am nygshe shent
But if I sette my ful entent
Remedye to purueye
Wherfore close I shal the wey
Fro hem that wol the rose espye
And come to wayte me vilonye
For in good faythe and in trouthe
I wol not let for no slouthe
To lyue the more in sykernesse
Do make anon a fortresse
Thay close the roses of good sauour
In myddes shal I make a tour
To put Bialacoil in prison
For euer I drede me of treson
I trowe I shal hym kepe so
That he shal haue no might to go
Aboute to make companye
To hem that thynke of vilanye
Ne to no surhe as hath ben here
Aforne/ and founde in him good chere
Whiche han assayled him to shende
And with her trowandyse to blende
A foole is eyth to begyle
But may I lyue a lytel while
He shal forthynke his fayre semblaunt.
And with that worde came Drede auaunt
Whiche was abasshed/ and in great fere
Whan he wyste Jelousye was there
He was for drede in surhe affray
That not a worde durste he saye
But quaspng stode ful styl alone
(Tyl Jelousye his way was gone)
Saue Shame/ that him not forsoke
Bothe Drede and she ful sore quoke
That at laste Drede abrayde
And to his cosyn Shame sayde

Shame (he sayd) in sothfastnesse
To me it is great heynesse

That

That the noyse so ferre is go
And the sclaunder of bo two
But sythe that it is befall
We may it not agayne call
Whan ones sprongen is a fame
For many a pere withouten blame
We haue ben/and many a day
For many an Apull/and many a May
We han passed/not shamed
Yet Iealousye hath vs blamed
Of mystrust and suspection
Lausarisse/without encheson
Go we to Daunger hastely
And let vs shewe hym openly
That he hath not a right wrought
Whan that he set not his thought
To kepe better the purpris
In his doyng he is not wyse
He hath to vs do great wronge
That hath suffred now se so longe
Dialacoil to haue his wyll
Al his lustes to fulfyll
He muste amende it vtterly
Or els shal he vilaynously
Eppyled be out of this londe
For he the werre may not withstonde
Of Iealousye/nor the grese
Sythe Dialacoil is at mischese.

TO Daunger Shame I Diede anon
The right way ben gon
The chorle they founde ben a sleepe
Lyggyng vnder an hawethorne
Vnder his heed no pyle we was
But in the stede a trusse of gras
He slombred/and a nappe he tooke
Yet Shame pitously him shoke
And great manace on him gan make
Why slepest thou/whan thou shulde wake
(Quod Shame) thou doest vs vilanye
Who trusteth the/he dothe folye
To kepe roses or bothoms
Whan they ben fayre in her sesons
Thou arte waype to samylarre
Where thou shuldeste straunge of chere
Stonte of thy poste/redy to grene
Thou doest great folye for to lene
Dialacoil here vnto to call
The yonder man/to shenden vs all
Though that thou slepe/we may here
Of Iealousye great noyse here
Arte thou now late/ryse vp an hye
And stoppe sone and delyuerly
Al the gappes of the hay
Do no fauour/I the pray
It falleth nothyng to thy name (Blame
To make fayre semblant/where thou mayste

IF Dialacoil be swete and free
Dogged and fel thou shuldest be
Froward and outrageous wyth
A chorle chaungeth that curteys is
This haue I herde ofte in sayeng
That many may for no dauntyng
Make a sperhauke of a bosarde
Al men wol holde the for musarde
That debonayre haue founden the
It spyteth the nought curteys to be
To do men plesaunce or seruyse
In the it is recreaundyse
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be lyke thy name/whiche is Daungere
Than al abawed in shewyng
Anon spake Drede/right thus sayeng
And said/Daunger I drede me
That thou ne woste besy be
To kepe that thou haste to kepe
Whan thou shuldest wake/thou art a slepe
Thou shalte be greued certainly
If the aspye Iealousye
Or if he fynde the in blame
He hath to day assayled Shame
And chased away/with great manace
Dialacoil out of this place
And sweareth shortly that he shall
Enclose him in a sturdy wall
And al is for thy wickednesse
For that thy sayleth straungenesse
Thyn herte I trowe be fayled all
Thou shalte repent in speciall
If Iealousye the sothe knewe
Thou shalte southynde/and sore rewe.

With that the chorle his clubbe gan shake
Fro wyping his eyen gan to make
And hydous chere/as many in rage

For

For yre he brent in his visage
Whan that he herde him blamed so
He said/ out of my wytte I go
To be discomfyte I haue great wronge
Certes I haue no we lyued to longe
Sithe I maye nat this closer kepe
Al quycke I wolde be doluen depe
If any may shal more repayre
In to this gardyn for soule or fayre
Wyne herte for yre gothe a fere
That I lette any entre here
I haue do folly no we I se
But no we it shal amended be
Who setteth fote here any more
Truly he shal repent it sore
For no man more in to this place
Of me to entre shal haue grace
Leuer I had with swerdes twayne
Throughout myn herte/in euery vayne
Perced to be/with many a wounde
Than slouthe shulde in me be founde
From henssorthe by nyght or day
I shal defende it if I may
Withouten any exception
Of eche maner condycion
And if I it any man graunte
Holdeth me for recreaunte.

Than Daunger on his fete gan stonde
And hente a bordon in his honde
Wrothe in his ire ne lefte he nought
But through the berger he hath sought
If he myght synde hole or trace
Where through that me mote forthe by pace
Or any gappe/he dyd it close
That no man might touche a rose
Of the Roser all aboute
He shytteth euery man without
Thus day by day Daunger is wers
More wonderfull and more dyuers
And feller ebe/ than euer he was
For hym ful ofte I synge alas
For I ne may nought/through his yre
Recouer that I moste desyre
Myn herte alas/wol brest a two
For Bialacoil I wrathed so
For certaynly in euery membre
I quake/whan I me remembre
Of the bothom/ whiche I wolde
Ful ofte a day seue and beholde
And whan I thynke vpon the lysse
And howe moche ioye and blysse
I had through the fauour swete
For wante of it I grone and grete
Whe thynketh I fele yet in my nose
The swete sauour of the rose
And no we I wote that I mote go
So ferre the freshe floures fro
To me ful welcome were the dethe
Absence therof (alas) me slethe
For whylom with this rose/ alas
I touched nose/ mouthe/ and face
But no we the dethe I must abyde
But Loue consent another tyde
That ones I touche may and kysse
I trowe my payne shal neuer lysse
Theron is al my couetyse
Whiche brent myn herte in many wyse
No we shal repayre agayne syghyng
Longe watche on nyghtes/ and no slepyng
Thought in wyssyng/ turment/ and wo
With many a turnyng to and fro
That halse my payne I can not tell
For I am fallen in to hell
From paradyse and welthe/the more
Wyp turment greueth more/and more
Anoyeth no we the bytternesse
That I to forne haue felte swetnesse
And wicked tonge/ through his falshede
Causeth al my wo and drede
On me he leyeth a pytous charge
Bycause his tonge was to large.

No we it is tyme shortly that I
Tell you somthyng of Ielousy
That was in great suspection
Aboute him leste he no mason
That stone couthe laye/ ne querroure
He hyred hem to make a toure
And first the roses for to kepe
Aboute hem made he a diche depe
Right wonder large/and also brode
Vpon the whiche also stode
Of squared stone/a sturdy wall
Whiche on a cragge was founded all
And right great thicknesse ebe it bare

About

About it was founded square
In standard sadesme on euery syde
It was al syche longe and wyde
Lest any tyme it were assayled
Ful wel about it was batayled
And rounde enuyron ese were sette
Ful many a riche and fayre towrette
At euery corner of this wall
Was sette a toure ful pumpaill
And euerliche hadde without fable
A portcolyse defensable
To kepe of enmyes/ and to greue
That there her force wolde preue
And ese enuyde this purpuse
Was made a toure of great maistryse
A fayrer sawgh no man with syght
Large and wyde/ and of great myght
They diadde none assaut
Of gynne/ gonne/ nor shaffaut
The temprure of the morter
Was made of lycour wonder dere
Of quycke syne persaunt and egre
The whiche was tempred with vynegre
The stone was harde of adamant
Wherof they made the foundemant
The toure was rounde made in compas
In al this worlde no richer was
Ne better ordayned there withal
About the toure was made a wal
So that betwyxt that and the toure
Roses were sette of swete sauour
With many rosyer that they bere
And ese without the castel were
Engynoures/ gonnes/ bowes/ and archers
And ese about at corners
They seyne ouer the wal fforde
Great engynes/ who were nerehonde
And in the bernels here and there
Of artilasters great plentie were
Most armure myght her stroke withstonde
I were folye to preue to longe
Without the dytche were tyssues made
With wal batayled large and brode
Fourmey and horse shulde not assayne
To nyghe the dyche ouer the playne
Thus Ielousye hath enuyron
Sette about his garnyson
With walles rounde/ and dytche depe
Duckyl the Roser for to kepe
And Daunger redy and late
The kepes kepte of the vtter gate
The whiche openeth toward the eest
And he had with him at leest
Thirty seruauntes echone by name
That other gate kept Shame
Whiche opened/ as it was couthe
Toward the parte of the southe
Sergeauntes assigned were her to
Ful many/ her wyl for to do
Than Drede had in her bailliye
The kepyng of the constablerye
Toward the northe I vnderstonde
That opened vpon the lyfte honde
The whiche for nothyng may be sure
But if she do besy cure
Redy on morowe/ and also late
Strongly to shette and barre the gate
Of euery thyng that she may se
Drede is a ferde/ where so she be
For with a puffe of lytel wynde
Drede is astonyed in her mynde
Therfore for stealyng of the rose
I rede her not the pate vnclose
A fowles flyght wol make her fle
And ese a shadowe if she it se.

THan Wicked tonge ful of enuye
With soudyours of Normandye
As he that causeth al the bate
Was kepere of the fourthe gate
And also to the tother there
He went ful ofte for to se
Whan his lotte was to wake a nyght
His instrumentes wol de he dyght
For to blowe and make sowne
After than he hath enchesoun
And walketh ofte vpon the wall
Corners and wicketes ouer all
Ful narowe he sercheth and espye
Thoughe he naught fonde/ yet wolde he lye
Discordaunt euer fro armony
And defouled from melodye
Contrarie he wolde/ and foule fayle
With hoterppes of Cornewayle
In floytes made he discordaunce
And in his musyke with mischaunce

He

He wolde seyne with notes newe
That he fonde no woman trewe
Ne that he sawe neuer in his lyfe
Vnto her husbonde a trewe wyfe
Ne none so ful of honeste
That she nyl laughe and merye be
Whan that she hereth or may espye
A man speken of lecherye
Euerych of hem hath some vyce
One is dishoneste/another is nyce
If one be ful of vilanye
Another hath a lyfterous eye
If one be ful of wantonnesse
Another is a chyderesse.

Thus wicked tonge/god yeue him shame
Can put hem euerychone in blame
Without deserte and causelesse
He lyeth/though they ben gyltlesse
I haue pyte to sene the sorowe
That walketh bothe eue and morowe
To innocentes dothe suche grenaunce
I pray god yeue hym yuel chaunce
That he euer so besye is
Of any woman to seyne amys
Eke Jelousye/ god confounde
That hath made a toure so rounde
And made aboute a garyson
To sette Bealacoil in prison
The whiche is shette there in the toure
Ful longe to holde there soiour
There for to lyue in penaunce
And for to do him more grenaunce
Whiche hath ordayned Jelousye
Ay olde beste for to espye
The maner of his gouernaunce
The whiche dyuel in her enfaunce
Had lerned of lones arte
And of his pleys toke her parte
She was expert in his scrupse
She knewe eche wrenche and euery gyse
Of Loue/and euery wyle
It was harde her to begyle
Of Bealacoil she toke aye hede
That euer he lyueth in wo and drede
He kepte him bope/and eke pryue
Lest in him she had se
Any foly countenaunce
For she knewe al the olde daunce
And after this whan Jelousye
Had Bealacoil in his baillie
And shette him vp that was so fre
For sure of him he wolde be
He trusteth sore in his castell
The stronge werke him lyketh well
He dradde not that no glotons
Shulde steale his roses or bothons
The roses werin assured all
Defenced with the stronge wall
Nowe Jelousye ful wel may be
Of dede demoyde in lyberte
Whether that he slepe or wake
For of his roses may none be take.

But I (alas) nowe moms shal
Because I was without the wal
Ful moche doole and more I made
Who had wyste what wo I hade
I trowe he wolde haue had pyte
Loue to dere had solde me
The good that of his lone had I
I wente aboute it al queyntly
But nowe through doublyng of my payne
I se he wolde it sell agayne
And me a newe bargayne lere
The whiche al out the more is dere
For the solace that I haue lome
Than I had it neuer afome
Certayne I am ful lyke in dede
To him that caste in erthe his sede
And hath hope of the newe spring
Whan it gremeth in the grauyng
And is also sayre and fresshe of floure
Lusty to sene/swote of odoure
Out er he it in shewes shere
May fall a wether that shal it dere
And make it to fade and fall
The stalke/ the greyne/ and flowres all
That to the tylleres is forbone
The hope that he had to sone
I drede certayne that so fare I
For hope and trauayle lyberly
Ben me byraft al with a storme
The flowre nyl fadey of my corne
For Loue hath so amanered me
Whan I began my pleynte

To Dialacoil al for to tel
Whom I ne founde fro warde ne fel
But to ye agree al hole my play
But lone is of so harde assaye
That al atones he reued me
Whan I weine best abourn to haue be
Ius of loue/as of fortune
That chaungeth ofte/and nyl continue
Whiche welcom wel on folke fmyle
And glombe on hem another while
Lo we frende no we for shalte her fele
For a twynclynge tourneth her wheele
She canne wythe her herd awaye
This is the concourse of her playe
She canne areyst that doth mourne
And wherle also lyne and ouerlourne
Who spitteth hyghest/ but as her list
A foole is he that wol her trust
For it is I that am come do lyne
Through charge and reuolutioun
Sythe Dialacoil mote fro me twynne
Shette in the prison ponde withoune
His absence at myne herte I fele
For al my hope and al myne hele
Was in him/ and in the Rose
That but pou wol/ whiche him dothe close
Opeune/ that I maye him se
Lone wol nat that I cured be
Of the payues that I endure
Nor of my cruel auenture.

Ah/ Dialacoil myne owne here
Though thou be in to me a prisonere
Kepe at leest thyne herte to me
And suffre nat that it daunted be
Nor lette nat Jelousy in his rage
Putten thyne herte in no seruage
Al though he chastice the without
And make thy body lyne to him lout
Haue herte as harde as diamaunt
Stedfast/and naught pleyaunt
In prison though thy body be
At large kepe thyne herte free
A trewe herte wol not plye
For no mannes thret it maye dye
If Jelousye doothe the payne
Daryte him fro thyne herte ageyne
To lenge the at leest in thought
If other waye thou mayst nought
And in this wyse subtelly
Worche/ and wynne the maistry
But yet I am in great affraye
Lest thou do nat/ as I saye
I drede thou canst me great mangre
That thou enpoysoned arte for me
But that not for my trespas
For through me neuer discouered was
Yet thynge/ that ought be secree
Wel more annoye is in me
Than is in the of this myschaunce
For I endure more harde penaunce
Than any canne saye or thynke
That for the sore we almost I synke
Whan I remembre me of my wo
Ful nyghe out of my wytte I go.
Inwarde myne herte I fele drede
For comfortlesse the dethe I drede
Owe I nat wel to haue dyspresse
Whan false/ through her wickednesse
And traytours/ that arne enuyous
To noyen me/ be so corragious
Ah/ Dialacoile ful wel I se
That they hem shape to discreyue the
To make the buxome to her lawe
And with her corde the to drawe
Where so hem lust/ right at her wyl
I drede they haue the brought there tyl
Without comforte/thought me slethe
This game wol bringe me to my dethe
For if youre good wyl I lese
I mote be dead I maye not chese
And if that thou forgete me
Myne hert shal neuer in syl ynge be
Nor elswhere fynde solace
If I be putte out of youre grace
As it shal neuer bey I hoope
Than shulde I fal in wanhope
Alas/ ch wanhope naye parde
For I shal neuer dispeyred be
If hope me faile/ than am I
Dugreteins and Vnworthy
In hoope I wol conforted be
For Loue/ whan he betaught her me
Bad/ that hoope where so I go
Shulde eye be refore to my wo
But what and she my bales bete

And be to me curteis and swete
She is in nothyng ful certayne
Louers she putte in ful great payne
And maketh hem with wo to dele
Her sayre beheste disceyueth sele
For she wol behote sykerly
And sayleth after vtterly
Ah/ that is a ful noyous thyng
For many a louer in louyng
Hangeth vpon her/ and trusteth fast
Whiche lese her trauayle at the last
Of thyng to cõmen she wotte right nought
Therfore if it be wisely sought
Her counsayle foly is to take
For many tymes/ whan she wol make
A ful good sylogisme/ I drede
That afterwarde there shal in dede
Folowe an vncl conclusyoun
This putte me in confusyoun
For many tymes I haue it sene
That many haue begyled bene
For trusie that they haue sette in hoope
Whiche fel hem afterwarde a slope.

BVt natheleſſe yet gladly she wolde
That he that wol hir with her holde
Hadde al tymes her purpose clere
Without diſcreyte or any were
That she deſpreth ſpyterly
Whan I her blamed I dyd foly
But what anayleth her good wyl
Whan she ne maye ſtaunche my ſtoude yl
That helpeth lytel that she maye do
Duttake beherſt vnto my wo
And herſt certayne in no wyſe
Without peſte is nat to preyſe.

Whan herſt and dede a ſondre varp
They done a great contrary
Thus am I poſſed vp and downe
With doole/ thought/ and confuſyoune
Of my diſeaſe there is no nombre
Daungere and Shame me encombre
Drede alſo/ and Jelouſye
And Wicked Tonge ful of enuye
Of whiche the ſharpe and cruel Ire
Ful oft me putte in great martyre
They haue my rope fully lette
Sithe Dialacoil they haue beſtette
Fro me in priſon wickedly
Whome I loue ſo entierly
That it wol my bane be
But I the ſoonre maye him ſe
And yet more ouer worſte of al
There is ſette to kepe/ leſte her befal
A Rympled Beſte ferce comme in rage
Fro wonyng and pelo we in her viſage
Whiche in awayte lyeth day and nyght
That none of hem may haue a ſyght.

O Dwe moste my ſorowe confounde be
Ful ſothe it is that Loue ſayſe me
The wonder peſtes of his greue
Whiche I haue ſome no we in thys place
Sithe they ne maye without daunce
Helpen but lytel who taſteth hede
For here auayleth no Swete thought
And ſwete Speche helpeth right nought
The thurde was called Swete Lokyng
That no we is ſome without leſyng.

Yeſtes were ſayre/ but nat for thy
They helpe me but ſymply
But Dialacoil looſed be
To gone at large/ and to be free
For him my lyfe lyeth al in dout
Dut if he come the rather out
Alas I trowe it wol nat bene
For howe ſhulde I euermore him ſene?
He maye nat out/ and that is wronge
Dpeauſe the Toure is ſo ſtronge
Howe ſhulde he out/ or by whoſe proweſſe
Of ſo ſtronge a fortereſſe?
By me certayne it nyl be do
God wotte I haue no wytte therto
But wel I wotte I was in rage
Whan I to Loue dydde homage
Who was in cauſe (in ſothfaſtneſſe)
Dut her ſelfe dame Idelneſſe;
Whiche me conueyde thrugh ſayre prayere
To entre in to that ſayre Vergere
She was to blame me to leue
The whiche no we dothe me ſore greue
A fooles worde is nought to trowe
Nor worthe an apple for to ſowe
Whome ſhulde him ſuppoſe bitterly

At prime temps of his folye
I was a foole/and slepe me fetch
Through whom I am right nought releued
Ne accomplyssed al my wyll
That no wo me greueth wonder yll.

Reason me sayde what shalde sall
A foole my selfe I may wel call
That loue a tyde I has nat sayde
And troloed that same Reson sayde
Reson had bothe slyll and ryght
When she me blamed/with al her myght
To medle of loue/that hath me shent
But certaynt no wo I wol repent.

And shulde I repent: nay parde
A false traytour/than shulde I be
The dyuels engyns wolde me take
If I my loue wolde forsake
Or Dalacoil falsly betraye
Shulde I at mischefe hate him: naye
Sythe he no we for his curtesye
In my prison of Ielousye
Curtesye certayne dyd he me
So moche/that it may not polden be
Whan he the hay passen me sete
To kysse the Rose/fayre and swete
Shulde I therfore coueyte him maugre
Nay certaynly/it shal not be
For Loue shal neuer peue good wyll
Here of me/though wrde or wyll
Offence or complaynt more or lesse
Neyther of Hope nor Idelnesse
For certes it were wronge that I
Hated hem for her curtesye
There is not elo/but suffre and thynke
And wayten whan I shulde wynke
Abyde in hope/tyl Loue through chaunce
Lande me socour or allegeaunce
Expectant aye tyl I may mete
To gretten mercy of that swete.

Whylom I thynke so we Loue to me
Eyed he wolde take at gre
By seruyce/if Vnparaunce
Lensed me to done offence
He sayd/in thought I shal it take
And hyghe mayster cle the make
If wicked nesse me reue it the
But sone I trow me shal not be
These were his wordes by and by
It semed he loued me trewly
Now we is there not but serue him wele
If that I thynke his thanke to fele
Wy good myn harme/sythe hole in me
My loue may no defaute be
For trewe loue me sayled neuer may
Notlyss the faute mote neden thay
As god forbyd/be founde in me
And howe it cometh/I can not se
Nowe set it gone as it may go
Whether Loue wol socoure me or slo
He may do hole on me his wyll
I am so sore bounde hym tyll
From his seruyce I may not flene
For lyfe and dethe withouten wene
Is in his hande/I may not chese
He may me do bothe wynne and lese
And sythe so sore he dothe me greue
Yet if my lyste he wolde acheue
To Dalacoil goodly to be
I reue no force what fel on me
For though I dye/as I mote nede
I pray Loue of his goodlyhede
To Dalacoil do gentylnesse
For whom I lyue in suche distresse
That I mote dyen for penaunce
But first/without repentaunce
I wol me confesse in gode entent
And make in haste my testament
As soueryn done that feleth smerte
To Dalacoil leaue I myn herte
Al hole/without departyng
Or doublenesse of repentyng.

¶ Comment Raison vient a Lamant.

Thus as I made my passage
In complaynt and in cruel rage
And I not where to synde a lerche
That couthe vnto myn helpyng erche
Sodaunly agayne comyn doun
Out of her tour I sawe Reasoun
Discrete and wyse/and ful pleasaunt
And of her porte ful auenaunt
The right way she toke to me
Whyche stode in great perplexite

That was possshed in euery syde
That I nyst where I myght abyde
Tyl she demurely sadde of chere
Sayd to me as she came nere
Wyne owne frende/ arte thou greued?
Howe is this quarel yet atcheued
Of loues syde? anone tel me
Hast thou nat yet of loue thy syl?
Arte thou nat wery of thy scrupee?
That the hath in suche wyse?
What rope hastie thou in thy louyng?
Is it swete or bytter thyng
Lanst thou yet chese/ lette me se
What best thy socour myght be.

Thou seruest a ful noble lorde
That maketh the thral for thy reward
Whiche aye renewyth thy tourment
With soly so he hath the blent
Thou sel in myschese thylke daye
Whan thou dyddest/ the sothe to saye
Obeysaunce/ and eke homage
Thou wroughtest nothyng as the sage
Whan thou became his lege man
Thou dyddest a great foly than
Thou wystest nat what sel therto
With what lorde thou haddest to do
If thou haddest him wel knowe
Thou haddest nought be brought so lowe
For if thou wystest what it were
Thou noldest serue him halfe a pere
Nat a weke/ nor halfe a daye
Ne yet an hour without delaye
Ne neuer I loued paramours
His lordshyppe is so ful of shours
Knowest him ought?
Lamaunt. Ye dame parde
Raysoun. Nay nay Lamaunt. yes I
Raysoun. Wherfore lette se
Lamaunt. Of that he sayd I shulde be
Gladde to haue suche lorde (as he)
And maister of suche seignoure
Raysoun. Knowest him no more?
Lamaunt. Naye certes I
Sawe that he pase me rules there
And went his waye/ I nyst where
And I abode bounde in balaunce
Lo/ there a noble conysaunce.

Raysoun.

But I wol that thou knowe him nowe
Gynnynge and ende/ sithe that thou
Arte so angrysshous and matz
Dissygured out of astate
There maye no wiedche haue more of wo
Ne captise none endureth so
It were to euery manne sytting
Of his lorde haue knowlegyng
For if thou knewe him out of dout
Lightly thou shuldest escapen out
Of thy prysone that marreth the
Lamaunt. Ye dame sithe my lorde is he
And I his manne made with myne handz
I wolde ryght sayne vnderstonde
To knowe of what kynde he be
If any wolde enfourme me.

Raysoun.

I Wolde (sayd Reason) the lere
Sithe thou to serue hast suche desyre
And shewe the withouten fable
A thynge that is nat demonstrable
Thou shalte withouten science
And knowe withouten experience
The thyng that may nat knowen be
Ne wyst ne shewed in no degree
Thou mayst the sothe of it nat wytten
Though in the it were written
Thou shalte nat knowe therof more
Whyle thou arte ruled by his lore
But vnto him that loue wol flye
The knotte maye vnclosed be
Whiche hath to the/ as it is founde
So longe to knytte and nat vnbounde
Nowe sette wel thyne entencions
To here of Loue dyscriptions.

Due it is an hateful pees
A free acquytaunce without reles
And through the strette ful of falsshede
A sikernesse al sette in drede
Thy herte is a dispeyryng hoope
And ful of hoope it is wanhoope
Wyse woodnesse/ and Ioyde Reasons
A swete peryl ay to dis wyne
An heuy burthen lyght to beare
A wicked waye a wape to weare
It is Carybdes perilous
Disagreable and gracious

Ib

It is defcodamage that can accorde
And accordaunce to difcorde
It is comynge without fiyenge
Defyrous without fuppryfe
Wyfe without defcretion
Hanoyte without poffeffyon
It is fyche hele and hole fyckenefle
A trufte without loue and loyaltefle
And feithe full of vnfaythe
And charyte full of enuye
And engre full of vnkyndenefle
And a grete fuggeftion
Delyte right full of fenynefle
And enuyed full of glofynefle
Pytte fwetneffe and fwete errour
Right pure fauoured good fauour
Hey that pardone hath without fynne
And pardone fpotted without fpotte
A payne alfo it is to poyne
And felonye right pytous
Alfo playe that falfe is ftable
And ftedfaft right vnftable
A ftrength weyked to ftonde vpright
And feirneffe full of myght
Wytte vnauyfed! fage folye
And ioye full of tourmentrye
A fangleer it is to wepynge aye
Reft that trauayleth nyght and daye
Alfo a fwete fickenefle it is
And a forowful paradyfe
A pleafaunt gayle and eafy prifoun
And full of froft fomer feafoun
Pytous trompe full of frofted whyte
And whyte hemyde of al defyte
With fere fayrneffes like flowres Vngrene
And wexe fruite fpoiled with wynter tene
It is a fhe me mayde not forbeare
Rayges refoned with golde to weare
For al fo wel wel fowe be fette
Vnder rayges as riche rochette
And clothes wel by aqueintes
To mourning blacke as knyght burnettes
For none is of fo mokel pryfe
Ne no maner fourdeyn fo wyfe
Ne maner fo fingler is of parage
Ne no manne fcombre of wytte fo fage
So mannes fo ftarky ne fo knyght
Ne no manne of fo mokel myght
Nouo fo fufpyfed of fcornie
That he wold fomewhat haunted be
If the lyuelode fodeyn thys waye
Loue medefy al to gone my fwaye
But it be they of fmal lyfe
Whome Genius curfed many and wyfe
That wrongly werke againe nature
None fuche I fonde ne haue no cure
Of fuche as fomen fenfuelnes lene
And wol not by my counfayle flene
For I ne purpofe that hauynge
Wherthrough many at the laft endynge
Shal cal hem wretches ful of wo
Loue greueth hem and fhendeth fo
But if thou wolte wel fone efchewe
For to efcape out of the mewe
And make al hoole thy fore we to flake
No better counfayle mayft thou take
Than thynke to flenge wel pluis
Wape nought fothe elis! for wytte thou this
If thou flye it! it fhal flye the
Folo we it! and folowen fhal it the.

¶ Lamaunt.

Whan I hadde herde al Reafon fayne
Whiche had fpilte her fpeche in vayne
Dame (fayd I) I dare wel faye
Of this enaunt me thef I maye
That from youre fchole fo demaunt
I am/that neuer the more enaunt
Right nought am I through your doctryne
I dalle vnder youre difcipryne
I wotte no more than wyfte euer
To me fo contrary and fo fer
In euery thynge that ye me lere
And yet I renne it al by partuere
Whyne herte forpenfe therof right nought
It is fo writen in my thought
And depe grauen it is fo tender
That al myne herte I can it render
And rede it ouer commounely
But to my felfe fcholefl am I.

But fithe ye Reaue beforeyen fo
And fcholle and preche it bothe two
Defyrous it to ofe better
That I maye therafter eu it the better
For I herde neuer diffreuth here
And wyfefully I wolde it lere

If loue be serched well and sought
It is a sickernesse of the thought
Annoyed and troubde vehemently
With male and female lyth and sheyne
So sekly that bynderth/ that they nyl chynne
Whether so therof they lese or wynne
The rote springeth through hoote brennynge
In to disordynate desyringe
For to kyssen and embrace
And at her lustes them to solace
Of other thynge loue reccheth nought
But setteth her herte and al her thought
More for delectation
Than any procreation
Of other fruite by engendrure
Whiche loue to god is nat pleasure
For of her body stupte to gette
They yeue no force/ they are so sette
Upon delyte to playe in fere
And some haue also this maneere
To fayney hem for loue sake
Suche loue I preyse nat at a lake
For paramours they do but fayne
To loue trewly they disdayne
They falsen ladyes traytourssly
And swerne hem othes vtterly
With many a leesyng/ and many a fable
And al they fynden discrepuable
And whan they han her lustes gotten
The hoote ernes they al forgetten
Women the harme kyen ful sore
But menne this thynken euermore
That lasse harme is/ so mote I thee
Discreue them/ than discreued be
And namely where they ne maye
Fynde none other meane waye
For I wotte wel in soothfastnesse
That what dothe nowe his besynesse
With any woman for to dele
For any lustes that he maye sele
But if it be for engendrure
He dothe trespasse I you ensure
For he shulde setten al his wyl
To getten a lykely thynge hym tyl
And to sustayne/ if he myght
And kepe forthe by kyndes ryght
His owne lykenesse and semblable
For because al is corrumpable
And sayle shulde succession
Ne were their generation
Our seedes sterne fast to saue
Whan father or mother arne ygrane
Her children shulde/ whan they ben dede
Ful diligent bene in her stede
To vse that warke on suche a wyse
That one may thought another tyse
Therfore sette kynde therto delyte
For men therto shulde hem delyte
And of that dede be nat erbe
But ofte sythes haunt that werke
For none wolde doone therof a draught
Ne were delyte/ whiche hath hem caught
This had subtyl dame Nature
For none gothe right I the ensure
Ne hath entent hoole ne parfyte
For her desyre is for delyte
The whiche sothened crease/ and eke
The playe of loue/ for ofte seke
And that hem selfe they be so nyse
On to the prynce of euery vyce
For of eche synne it is the rote
Vnlefful lust/ though it be sote
And of al euel the racyne
As Tullyus came determyne
Whiche in his tyme was ful sage
In a booke he made of age
Where that more he prayseth elde
Though he be croked and vnwelde
And more of cõmendation
Than youthe in his description
For youthe sette bothe man and wyfe
In al parel of soule and lyfe
And parel is/ but men haue grace
The parel of youthe for to pace
Without any dethe or destresse
It is so ful of wyldenesse
So ofte it dothe shame or damage
To him or to his lynage
It ledeth man/ nowe vp nowe doune
In mokel dissolation
And maketh hym loue euel company
And lede his lyfe distrusply
And haste hym payde with none estate
Within hym selfe in suche debate
He chaungeth purpose and entent
And paste is to sayne repent

To hunt after her enuy
And leseth seruery and seemelyhede
That nature in hem hadde sette
The whiche agayne he may not gette
If he there make her mansyon
For to abyde parfytly
Though for a tyme his herte absente
It may not laste/he shal repente
And eke abyde thilke day
To seruyse her abyte/and gon her way
And leseth his tyme and his payne
And dare not come agayne for shame
But al his lyfe he dothe so mourne
Drauie he dare not home retourne
Fadoin of hymde so lothe hath he
That neuer may recured be
But that of god hym graunte grace
That he may/er he hens pace
Contryue vnder obedience
Though the lenuie of patience
For youthe set many in al folye
In vnthryfte and in ryotousnesse
In lechery/and in outrage
So ofte it chaungeth of corage
Youthe gyueth ofte suche bargayne
That may not ende without payne
In great parell as set youth hede
Delyte so dothe his priuell lede
Delyte this hangith/dothe the nought
Dothe many body and his thought
Onely thorugh youthes chambers
That to done priuell is customers
And of naught els taketh hede
But onely foldes for to lede
In to disporte and wylderuesse
So is fro warde from sadnesse
But elde dia with hem therfro
Who wote it not/he may wel go
And mo of hem/that no lye arne olde
That whylom youthe had in holde
Whiche yet remembreth of tymber age
How it hem brought in many a rage
And many a folye therin wrought
But now that elde hath hym thorugh sought
They repent hem of her folye
That youthe hem put in vnquyetye
In parill and in mochle woe
And made hem ofte sorysse to be
And sythen yuell compleyne
Wyte and euermore

But elde gan ageyne restreyne
From suche folye and refrayne
And set men by her ordynaunce
In good rule and in gouernaunce
But yuel she spendeth her seruyse
For no man wol her loue neyther preyse
She is hated/this wote I wele
Her acquayntaunce wolde no man fele
Ne hau of elde compaynye
Men hate to be of her alye
For no man wolde becomen olde
Ne dye/ whan he is youge and bolde
And elde meruayleth right greatly
Whan they remembre hem inwardly
Of many a perillous enprise
Whiche that they wrought in sondre wyse
How euer they might without blame
Escape away without shame
In youthe without domage
Dis repreue of her lynage
Losse of membre/shedyng of blood
Parell of dethe/or losse of good
Wost thou not where youthe abyt
That men so preysen in her wyt?
With Delyte she halt soiour
For bothe they dwellen in o tour
As longe as youthe is in seuson
They dwellen in one mansyon
Delyte of youthe wol haue seruyce
To do what so he wol deuyse
And youthe is redy euermore
For to obeye for smerte of soore
Vnto Delyte/ and hym to yeue
Her seruyce/ whyle that she may lyue.

Where elde abydeth/I wol the tel
Shortly/ and no while dwel
For thyder behoueth the to go
If dethe in youthe the nat slo
Of this iourney thou mayst nat fayle
With her labour and trauayle
Lodged hem with sorowe and woe
That neuer out of her courte go
Payne and dyssesse/sykenesse/and yre
And melancoly that angry syre

Den

Bene of her palays senatours
Gronyng and grutchyng/ her herbegeours
The daye and nyght her to tourment
With cruel dethe they her present
And tellen her erlyche and late
That dethe stondeth armed at her gate
Than bryngē they to her remembraunce
The foly vices of her enfaunce
Whiche causen her to mourne in wo
That youthe hath her begyled so
Whiche sodaunly away is hasted
She weped the tyme that she hath wasted
Complaynynge of the preterytte
And the present/ that nat abydeth
And of her olde vanyte
That but afore her she maye se
In the future some socoure
To leggen her of her dolsoure
To graunt her tyme of repentaunce
For her synnes to do penaunce
And at the laste so her governe
To wynne the ioye that is eterne
Fro whiche go backwarde youthe he made
In vanyte to drowne and wade
For present tyme abydeth nought
It is more swyfte than any thought
So lytel whyle it dothe endure
That there nys compte ne measure
But howe that euer the game go
Who lyst to loue ioye and myrthe also
Of loue/ be it he or she
Hye or lowe who it be
In trupte they shulde hem delyte
Her parte they maye nat elles quyte
To saue hem selfe in honestie
And yet ful many one I se
Of women/ sothly for to sayne
That despyse/ and wolde sayne
The playe of loue/ they be so wylde
And nat coueyte to go with chylde
And if with chylde they be perchaunce
They wol it holde a great myschaunce
But what so euer wo they fele
They wol nat playne/ but concele
But if it be any foole or nyce
In whome that shame hath no iuflyce
For to delyte ethone they drawe
That haunt this worlde bothe hye and lowe
Shame suche that arne worthe right nought
That for money wol be bought
Suche loue I paryse in no wyse
Whan it is gotten for couetyse
I preyse no woman/ though so be woode
That yeueth her selfe for any goode
For lytel shulde a man telle
Of her/ that wel her body selle
Be she mayde/ be she wyfe
That quyteth wol selle her by her lyfe
Howe sayne there that euer she make
Her is a wytche I vnderfonge
That loued suche one/ for swete or soure
Though she hym called her paramoure
And laugheth on hym/ and maketh hym fest
For certainly no suche beest
To be loued is nat worthy
Or beare the name of Dame
None shulde her please/ but he were woode
That wol dispoyle hym of his goode
Yet natheleste I wol nat saye
That she for solace and for playe
Maye a iewel or other thynge
Take of her loues free yeuynge
But that she asse it in no wyse
For drede of shame/ or couetyse
And she of hers maye him acquayne
Without sclaunder yeuen agayne
And ioyne her hertes togyder so
In loue/ and take and yeue also
Trowe nat that I wol hem twynne
Whan in her loue there is no synne
I wol that they togyder go
And done al that they hanne ado
As curteys shulde and debonayre
And in her loue beren hem fayre
Without vyce/ bothe he and she
So lyst al waye in honestie
Fro folly loue to kepe hem clere
That bienneth hertes with his fere
And that her loue in any wyse
Be demyde of couetyse
Good loue shulde engendred be
Of trewe hert/ iuste/ and fre
And nat of suche as sette her thought
To haue her luste/ and elis nought
So are they caught in loues lace
Trewly for bodily solace

Thilke

Flesshely delyte is so present
With the/that set al thyn entent
Without more/what shulde I glose
For to get and haue the Rose
Whiche maketh the so mate and wood
That thou desyrest none other good
But thou arte not an vnche the nerre
But euer abydest in sorowe and werre
As in thy face it is sene
It maketh the bothe pale and lene
Thy might/ thy vertue gothe away
A sory gest in good fay
Thou herbourest in thyn inne
The god of Loue whan thou let inne
Wherfore I rede thou shette him oute
Or he shal greue the out of doute
For to thy prosyte it wol turne
If he no more with the sojourne
In great mischefe and sorowe sonken
Den hertes/that of loue arne dronken
As thou peraventure hast wel shall
Whan thou hast lost the tyme al
And spent by thought in ydelnesse
In waste/and wosul lustynesse
If thou mayst lyue the tyme to se
Of loue for to delyuered be
Thy tyme thou shalte bewepe sore
The whiche neuer thou mayst restore
For tyme lost/as men may se
For nothyng may recouered be
And if thou scape/yet at laste
Fro loue that hath the so faste
Inprte and bounden in his lace
Certayne I holde it but a grace
For many one as it is seyne
Haue lost/and spent also in veyne
In his seruyce without socour
Body and soule/good/ and treasour
Wytte/ and strength/and ese eyrhesse
Of whiche they had neuer redresse.

¶ Lamant.

Thus taught & preched hath Reason
But Loue spylte her sermon
That was so imped in my thought
That her doctryne I set at nought
And yet me sayd she neuer a dele
That I ne vnderstode it wele
Worde by worde the mater all
But vnto Loue I was so thrall
Whiche calleth ouer al his prayse
He chaseth so my thought aye
And holdeth myne herte vnder his fete
As trusty and trewe as any stele
So that no deuocion
Ne had I in the sermon
Of dame Reason/ ne of her rede
It tooke no sojour in myn herde
For al pede out at one eye
That in that other she dyd lete
Fully on me she lost her loue
Her speche me greued wonder soue.

That vnto her for ire I sayde
For anger/as I dyd abrayde
Dame/and is it your wyl algate
That I not loue/but that I hate
Al men/as ye me teche
For if I do after your speche
Sythe that ye seyne loue is not good
Than must I nedes say with mode
If I it leue/in hatred aye
Lyuen/and bolde loue away
From me a synful wrethe
Hated of al that lethe
I may not go none other gate
For eyther muste I loue or hate
And if I hate men of newe
More than loue/it wol me rewe
As by your preching semeth me
For Loue nothyng ne playseth the
Ye yeue good counsayle sykerly
That preseth me al day/ that I
Shulde not loues lore also we
He were a foole wolde you not trowe
In speche also ye say me taught
Another loue that knowen is naught
Whiche I haue herde you not repreue
To loue eche other by your leue
If ye wolde dissyne it me
I wolde gladly here to se
At the lest if I may lere
Of soudue loues the maniere.

¶ Raison.

Ame frende/a foole arte thou
Whan that thou nothyng wolte also w
That I for thy profyte saye
Yet wol I saye the more in faye

For

For I am redy at the leest
To accomplysshe thy requeste
But I not where it wol auayle
In vayne paraventure I shale trauayle
Love there is in sondrye wyse
As I shal the here deuyse
For some love lefful is and goode
I meane nat that whiche marreth the woode
And bringeth the in many a fytte
And rauysheth fro the al thy wytte
It is so marueylous and queynt
With suche love be no more aqueynt.

¶ Cõment Raison diffinist Amiste.

LOue of frendshippe also there is
Whiche maketh no man done amys
Of wyl vnytte betwixte two
That wol nat breke for wele ne wo
Whiche longe is lykely to contune
Whan wyl and goodes ben in cõmune
Grounded by goddes ordynaunce
Hoole without discordaunce
With hem holdynge cõmunte
Of al her good in charyte
That there be none exceptioun
Through chaungynge of entencioun
That eche helpe other at her nede
And wisely hele bothe worde and dede
Trewe of meanyng/ deuoyde of slouthe
For wytte is nought without trouthe
So that the tone dare al his thought
Sayne to his frende/ and spare nought
As to him selfe without dredynge
To be discouered by wreyng
For gladde is that communcioun
Whan there is none suspecioun
Whome they wolde proue
That trewe and parfyte werry in loue
For no man maye be amyable
But if he be so ferme and stable
That fortune chaunge him nat ne blynde
But that his frende al waye him fynde
Bothe poore and ryche in o state
For if his frende through any gate
Wol complayne of his powerte
He shulde nat byde so longe/ tyl he
Of his helpynge him requyre
For good dede done through prayere
Is solde and bought to dere ywis
To hert that of great valure is
For herte fulfylled of gentylnesse
Canne fuel deneaue hes distresse
And man that worthy is of name
To asshenne often hath great shame
A good manne bisieth in his thought
For shame whan he asketh ought
He hath great thought / and dredeth aye
For his disease whan he shal praye
His frende/ lest that he warned be
Tyl that he preue his stabilyte
But whan that he hath founden one
That trusty is and trewe as stone
And assayed him at al
And founde him stedfast as a wal
And of his frendshippe be certayne
He shal him shewe/ bothe ioye and payne
And al that dare thynke or saye
Without shame/ as he wel maye
For howe shulde he a shamed be
Of suche one as I tolde the
For whan he wotte his secret thought
The thirde shal knowe therof right nought
For twey in nombre it bette than thre
In euery counsayle and secret
Repreue he dredeth neuer a dele
Who that besette his wordes wele
For euery wyse manne out of drede
Canne kepe his tonge tyl he se nede
And fooles canne nat holde her tonge
A fooles bolle is soone ronge
yet shal a trewe frende do more
To helpe his felowe of his sore
And socour him whan he hath nede
In al that he maye done in dede
And gladder that he him pleaseth
Than his felowe that he easeth
And if he do nat his requeste
He shal as moche him moleste
As his felowe/ for that he
Maye nat fulfyl his volunte
Fully/ as he hath requyred
If bothe the hertes love hath fyred
Joye and wo they shal departe
And take euenly eche his parte
Halfe his anoye he shal haue aye
And comforte what that he maye

And of this lyfsse parte shal he
Ifoule wel departed be.

ANd whylom of this Loyte
Spake Tullius my a dyte
And sayde maken hys requeste
Vnto his frende/that is honeste
And he goodly shulde it fulfyll
But it the more were out of skyll
And other wyse not graunte therto
Except only in causes two
If men his frende to dethe wolde dryue
Let him be besy to saue his lyue
Also if men wolden him assayle
Of his worshyp to make him fayle
And sklaudren him of his renoun
Let him with ful entencioun
His deuer done in eche degre
That his frende ne shamed be
In this two case with his myght
Lasyng no lepe to spyll not ought
As ferre as loue may him excuse
This ought no man to refuse
This loue that I haue tolde to the
Is no thyng contrarye to me
This wel I that thou folowe wele
And leaue the tother euery dele
This loue to vertue al entendeth
The tother fooles blent and shendeth.

Another loue also there is
That is contrarye vnto this
Wiche desyre is so constrayned
That is but wyl fayned
Away fro trouthe it doth so varye
That to good loue it is contrarye
For it mayneth in many wyse
Hyse hertes with coueityse
Al in wyuryng and in profyte
Suche loue setteth his delyte
This loue so haugheth in balaunce
That if it lese his hope parchaunce
Of lucre/that he is set vpon
I wol sayle/and nourysshe many
For no man may be amorous
Ne in his lyuyng vertuous
But he loue more in mesure
Than for hym selfe/than for her goode
For loue that profyte dothe abyde
Is false/and hydeth not in no syde
Loue cometh of dame Fortune
That stedfast whyle wol contune
For it shal chaungen wonder soone
And take eclypse right as the moone
Whan he is from vs sette
Through erthe/that betwixt is sette
The sonne and her/ as it may fall
Be it in partie/or in all
The shadowe maketh her bemes merke
And her homes to shewe derke
That parte/where she hath loste her lyght
Of Phebus fully/and the syght
Yet whan the shadowe is ouerpaste
She is enlumyned ageyn as faste
Through the brightnesse of the sonne bemes
That peneth to her agayne her lemes
That loue is right of suche nature
Nowe is fayre/and nowe obscure
Nowe bright/nowe dipsy of manere
And whylom dymme/& whylom clere
As soone as pouerte gynneth take
With mantel and weedes blake
Hydeth of loue the light away
That vp to nyght it turneth day
It may not se nathesse shyne
Yet the blacke shadowes fyne
For whan rychesse shyneth bright
Loue recouereth ayen his syght
And whan it fayleth/he wol flyt
And as she greueth/so greueth it
Of this loue here what I saye
The ryche men are loued aye
And namely tho that sparande bene
That wol not wasshe her hertes clene
Of the spitche/nor of the vyce
Of gredy hemmyng auarice
The ryche man ful fonde is ywis
That weneth that he loued is
If that his herte it vnderstode
It is not he/ it is his good
He may wel weten in his thought
Has good as loued/and he right nought
For if he be a nygarde ele
Why wol not set vp him a sele
But hatey him/ thus is the sothe
Lo what profyte his catel dothe

Of

Of euery man that may him se
It getteth him nought but enmyte
But he amende hym selfe of that vyce
And vnowe him selfe/he is not wyse
Lertes he shulde aye frendly be
To get hym loue also ben fre
Or els he is not wyse ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage
That he not loueth/ his dede proueth
Whan he his richesse so wel loueth
That he wol hyde it aye and spare
His poore frendes sene forfare
To kepen aye his purpose
Tyl for drede his eyen close
And tyl a wicked dethe him take
Hym had leuer a sondre shake
And let al his lymmes a sondre ryue
Than leaue his richesse in his lyue
He thynketh to parte it with no man
Certayne no loue is in him than
Howe shulde loue within hym be
Whan in his herte is no pyte
That he trespaseth wel I wate
For eche man knoweth his estate
For wel him ought to be reproued
That loueth nought/ne is not loued
But sithe we arne to fortune comen
And hath our sermon of her nomen
A wonder wyll I tel the nowe
Thou herdest neuer suche one I trowe
I not where thou me leuen shall
Though soth fastnesse it be all
As it is written/and is sothe
That vnto men more profyte dothe
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than the swote and debonaire
And if the thynke it is doutable
It is through argument prouable
For the debonayre and soste
Falseth and begyleth ofte
For lyche a mother she can cherisshe
And mysken as dothe a noure
And of her good to him deles
And peneth him parte of her ioweles
With great richesse and dignite
And hem she hoteth stedfastnesse
In a state that is not stable
But chaungyng aye and variable
And feedeth him with glosyng beyte
And worldly blysse vnmerciable
Whan she him setteth on her whele
Than weene they to be right wele
And in so stable state withall
That neuer they weene for to fall
And whan they sette so hygh be
They weene to haue in certeynte
Of bertily frendes so great nombre
That nothyng myght her state encombre
They truste hem so on euery syde
Wenyng with hym they wolde abyde
In euery parel and mischaunce
Without chaunge or variaunce
Bothe of catel and of good
And also for to spende her blood
And al her membres for to spyll
Onely to fulfyll her wyll
They maken it hole in many wyse
And hoten hem her ful seruyse
Howe fore that it do hem smerte
Into her very naked herte
Herte and al so hole they yeue
For the tyme that they may lyue
So that with her flaterye
They maken fooles glosyse
Of her wordes spekyng
And han there of a triopsyng
And trowe hem as the Euangyle
And it is al falshede and gyle
As they shal afterwarde se
Whan they arne fall in powerte
And ben of good and catell bare
Than shul they sene who frendes ware
For of an hundred certaynly
Nor of a thousande ful scarsly
Ne shal they fynde vnnethes one
Whan powerte is comen vpon
For thus Fortune that I of tell
With men whan her lyst to dwell
Maketh hem to lese her conysaunce
And norysheth hem in ignoraunce.

But frowarde fortune and peruerse
Whan high estates she dothe reuerse
And maketh hem to tumble downe
Of her whele with sodeyne tourne
And from her eyghesse dothe hem flye

And

And plongeth hem in pouerte
As a stepmother enuyous
And taketh a playsir dolorous
Vnto her herten wounded sore
Whiche is not tempred with Swetnesse
But with pouerte and tendresse
For to shewe hir cruelnesse
That she in Fortune hertelye
In whom no man shulde affye
Nat in her perfect hawe sikernesse
Whe is so ful of Variaunce
Thus can she maken hye and lowe
Whan they from rychesse come thus
Fully to knowen without mesure
Frende of effecte/and frende of there
And whiche in loue weren trewe and stable
And whiche also weren variable
After fortune her goddesse
In pouerte/ either in rychesse
For al that pouerte hem out of drede
Vnhappe berreueth it in dede
For in fortune lette not one
Of frendes/whan fortune is gone
I meane tho frendes that wol fle
Away as entreth pouerte
And yet they wol not leaue hem so
But in eche place where they go
They cal hem wretche/foolish/ and blame
And of her vnhappe hem defame
And namely suche as in rychesse
Pertendeth moste of stablenesse
Whan that they sawe hem set on lofte
And weren of hem fauoured ofte
And moste pholpe in al her nede
But no we they take no maner hede
But scorne in despyt of flaterye
That no we appereth her folye
Dare al where so they fare
And synge/ go farewel feldefare
Al suche frendes I beshrewe
For of trewe there be to fewe
But sothfaste frendes/ what so betyde
In eurry fortune wollen abyde
They han her herten in suche noblesse
That they nyl faine for no rychesse
Nat for that fortune may hem fynde
They wollen hem forsake and defende
And chaunge for vnfit ne fut fare
For who is frende louyth euermore
Though men doone sweorde his frende to slo
He may not fleme her loue a two
But in case that I shal say
For pride and ire lese it he may
And for reprouse by reporte
And discouerynge of pouerte
With tonge woundynge/ as felony
Though lecherous detraction
Frende in thin eare wol goo his weye
For nothyng gruue hem more ne meye
And for nought els wol he fle
If that he foune in stedfaste
And certayne he is wel begone
Amonge a thousande that fyndeth one
For there may be no rychesse
Ayenst frendshyp of worthynesse
For it ne may so hygh attayne
As may the valoure/ sothe to sayne
Of hym that loueth trewe and wel
Frendshyp is more than is catell
For frende in eourte aye better is
Than peny in purse certis
And fortune vnhappyng
Whan vpon men she is fastyng
Throughe misfurnyng of her chaunce
And caste hem out of balaunce
She maketh throughe her aduersyte
Men ful derkely for to se
Hym that is frende in pouerte
From hym that is by apparence
For in fortune maketh anone
To knowe the frendes fro thy fone
By experience right as it is
The whiche is more to prayse pleis
Than in moche rychesse and tresour
For more hope proefyte and valour
Pouerte/and suche aduersyte
Before/than bothe prosperyte
For that one pryueth conysaunce
And the tother ignoraunce.

And thus in pouerte is in dede
Trouthe declared fro falsshede
For fayned frendes it wol declare
And trewe also/ which way they fare
For whan he was in his rychesse
Thise frendes ful of doublenesse

Offred him in many wyse
Herte and body/ and seruyce
What wolde he thā haue pon to haue bought
To knowen openly her thought
That he nowe hath so clerely sene
The lasse begyled he shulde haue bene
And he hadde than parteyned it
But Richesse nolde nat sette hym wytte
Wel more auauntage dothe hym than
Suthe that it maketh him a wyse man
The great myscheefe that he parteyneth
Than dothe Richesse that him diseyseth
Richesse riche ne maketh nought
Hym that on treasour sette his thought
For richesse stonte in suffysaunce
And nothynge in habundaunce
For suffysaunce al onely
Maketh menne to lyue richely.

HOr he that hath myttches tweyne
Ne value in his demayne
Lyueth more at ease/ & more is riche
Than dothe he that is chiche
And in his berne hath sothe to sayne
An hundred maunys of whete grayne
Though he be chapman or marchaunt
And haue of golde many besaunt
For in the gettyng he hath suche wo
And in the kepyng drede also
And sette euermore his besynesse
For to encrease/ and nat to lesse
For to augment and multiplye
And though on heapes that lye him by
Yet neuer shal make his richesse
Asseth vnto his gredynesse
But the poore that retcheth nought
Saue of his lyuelode in his thought
Whiche that he getteth with his traueyle
He dredeth naught that it shal feyle
Though he haue lytel wonder goode
Meate and drynke/ and easy foode
Vpon his traueyle and swynyng
And also suffysaunt clothyng
Or if in sickenesse that he sat
And lothe meate and drynke withal
Though he haue nat his meate to bye
He shal bethynke him hastely
To putte him out of al daungere
That he of meate hath no mysseze
Or that he maye with lytel ese
Defoundey/ whyle that he is sicke
Or that men shul hym berne in hast
To lyue tyl his syckenesse be paste
To some Mayfonde we beryde
He caste nought what shal him betyde
He thynketh nought that euer he shal
In to any syckenesse fal.

ANd though it fal/ as it maye be
That al the tyme spare shal he
As moche as shal to hym suffyce
Whyle he is sycke in any wyse
He dothe for that he wol be
Content with his powerte
Without nede of any manne
So moche in lytel haue he canne
He is apayde with his fortune
And for he nyl be importune
Vnto no wyght/ ne onerous
Nor of her goodesse courytous
Therfore he sparith/ it maye wel bene
His poore estate for to sustene.

ORif hym lyste nat for to spare
But suffreth sothe/ as nat ne were
At laste it happeth/ as it maye
Right vnto his laste daye
And take the wonde as it wolde be
For euer in herte thynketh he
The sooner that dethe hym slo
To paradyse the sooner go
He shal/ there for to lyue in blysse
Where that he shal no good mysse
Thyder he hoopeth god shal hym sende
After his wretched lyues ende
Pythagoras hym selfe reherses
In a booke that the golden verses
Is cleped/ for the nobleyte
Of the honorable dyte
Than whan thou gost thy body fro
Fre in the eyre thou shalte vp go
And tranery al humanyte
And purely lyue in deite
He is a foole withouten were
That tro with hane his countery fare
In erthe in nat our cuntre

This

That may thise thynges seyne and se
In bookes of consolacion
Where it is mased mencion
Of our countrie playne at the eye
By techyng of philosophye
Where lerde men myght lere wyt
Who so that wolde translatery it
If he be sure that can well seyne
After his rent/may hym pene
And not despende more to saue
Than may fro pouerte hym saue
A wyse man sayde/as we may fynde
Is no man wretched/but he it wene
Be he kyng/knyght/or rybande
And many a ryband is mery and bande
That swynketh/& sweteth bothe day & nyght
Many a burthen of great myght
The whiche bothe hym lasse offende
For he suffreth in pacience
They laugh and daunce/ tryppe and springe
And lay nought by for her lyuyng
But in the taueme al dispendeth
The wynnyng that god hem sendeth
Than gothe he sardele for to bere
With as good chere as he byd ere
Ne swynke and trauayle he not sayneth
For to robben he disdayneth
But right anon/after his swynke
He gothe to tauerne for to drinke
Al these are ryche in habundaunce
That can thise same suffysaunce
Wel more than can an vsurere
Ne god wel fynde/without were
For my vsurer/so god me se
Shal neuer for rychesse ryche be
But euermore poore and indygent
Scarse and gredy in his entent.

For sothe it is/whom it displese
Where may no marth amonst hym at ese
His herte in suche a where is set
That it quyete hymself to get
Ne neuer shal/though he hath getyn
Though he hoord golde in gerners pryn
For to be ryche he taketh no rest
Wherfore to gettyng more and more
He set his herte and his desyre
As fole he dremeth in the fyre
Of couetyse/that maketh hym wode
To purchase other mennes good
He vnderfongeth a great payne
That vnderstandeth to drinke by Seyne
For the more he drinketh aye
The more he thurst/the sothe to saye
Thus is thurst of false gettyng
That saste euer in receyuing
And the angwysshe and distresse
With the fyre of gredynesse
Ne sysseth with hym aye/and stryueth
That his herte a sonder ryueth
Suche gredynesse hym assayleth
That whan he most hath/most he fayleth
Physicions/ and aduocates
Gone right by the same gates
They sell her science for wynnyng
And haunte her crafte for great gettyng
Her wynnyng is of suche swetnesse
That if a man fall in sickenesse
They are ful glad/for her encrese
For by her wyll/without lese
Euerysche may shulde be sese
And though they dye/they set not a lese
After whan they the golde haue take
Ful lytel care for hem they make
They wolde that fourty were sicke at ones
Ye two hundred in flesshe and bones
And yet two thousande/as I gesse
For to encresen her rychesse
They wol not worchen in no wyse
But for lucre and couetyse
For physike gynneth first by (phy)
The physyque also sothely
And sythen it gothe fro eye to eye
To trusse on hem it is folye
For they wyl in no maner gre
Do right nought for charyte
Ne in the same sorte are sette
Al the that parthen for to gette
Worshyppe/honour/and rychesse
Her hertes arne in great distresse
That folke synne not holily
But abomy al specially
Suche as parthen sepulture
And to warde god haue no mesure
But sothe as ypocrites trace
And to her soules bothe purchase

And outwarde shewyng holynesse
Though they be ful of cursednesse
Nat lyche to the apostels twelue
They discrepue other and hem selue
Begyled is the gyler thay
For preachyng of a cursed may
Though to other maye profyte
Hym selfe it auayleth nat a myte
For ofte good predicacioun
Lometh of puel entencioun
To hym nat bayleth his prechyng
Al helpe he other with his teachyng
For where they good ensample take
There is he with baynglorie shake
But sette vs leuen these prechours
And speke of hem that in her tours
Heape vp her golde/ and faste shette
And sore theron her herte sette
They neyther loue god ne drede
They kepe more than it is nede
And in her bagges sore it bynde
Out of the sonne/ and of the wynde
They putte vp more than nede ware
Whan they seue poore folke forfare
For hungre dye/ and for colde quake
God can wel vengeaunce therof take
The great mischeues hem assayleth
And thus in gadring aye trauayleth
With moche payne they wynne rychesse
And drede hem holdeth in distresse
To kepe that they gather faste
With sorowe they leaue it at the laste
With sorowe they bothe dye and lyue
That vnto rychesse her hertes yeue
And in defaute of loue it is
As it sheweth ful wel ywis
For if these gredy/the sothe to sayne
Loueden/and were loued agayne
And good loue reigned ouer all
Suche wickednesse ne shulde fall
But he shulde yeue/ that moste good had
To hem that weren in nede bestad
And lyue without falsse vsure
For charyte/ ful clene and pure
If they hem yeue to goodnesse
Defendyng hem from pdelnesse
In al this worlde than poore none
We shulde synde I trowe not one

But chaunged is this worlde vnstable
For lone is ouer al vendable
We se that no man loueth nowe
But for wynnyng and for prowe
And loue is thralled in seruage
Whan it is solde for auauntage
Yet women wol her bodyes sell
Suche soules gothe to the dyuel of hell.

Whan Loue had tolde hem his entent
The baronage to counsayle went
In many sentences they syll
And dyuersly they sayde her wyll
But after discorde they accorded
And her acorde to Loue recorded
Sir sayden they/we ben alone
By euen accorde of euerychone
Out take Rychesse al onely
That swore hath ful hautenly
That she the castell nyl not assayle
Ne smyte a stroke in this batayle
With darte ne mace/speare/ne knyfe
For may that speeth/as bereth the lyfe
And blameth your empuse ywis
And from our hoste departed is
At leest way/ as in this plyte
So hath she this may in dispyte
For she sayethe he ne loued her neuer
And therfore she wol hate him euer
For he wol gather no tresore
He hath her wrathe for euermore
He agylte her neuer in other caas
Lo here al holy his trespas
She sayethe wel/that this other day
He asked her leaue to gone the way
That is cleped to moche penyng
And spake ful fayre in his prayeng
But whan he prayed her/poore was he
Therfore she warned him the entre
Ne yet is he not thriuen so
That he hath getten a peny or two
That quytely is his owne in holde
Thus hath Rychesse be all tolde
And whan Rychesse be thus recorded
Withoutyn her we ben accorded.

And we fynde in our accordement
That Falsse Semblant and Abstynaunce

Wel

Wiſh al the ſeſſe of her bataylle
Shal at the fyrſte gate aſſayle
That Wicked Tonge hath in keepyng
Wiſh his Homaunt ful of ianglyng
And wiſh hem Lureſy and Largeſſe
That ſhal ſhette her harneyſſe
To the olde wyfe that kepeth ſo harde
Fayre Welcomyng wiſhin her warde
Than ſhal Delyte and Bel Halyng
Fonde/ Shame out wyte to bang
Wiſh al her hooſt early and late
They ſhal aſſayle that ylke gate
Agayne Drede ſhal Hardyneſſe
Aſſayle/ and alſo Hyderneſſe
Wiſh al the ſeſſe of her fendyng
That neuer wyſt what Mans ſkryng.

HAwtehſe ſhal fyght and ete Pyne
Wiſh Daungere ful of enuie
Thus is your hoſt aſtapted wele
Downe ſhal the Caſtel euery dele
If euerylle be his entent
So that Drede be preſent
Your mother ful of Reſſelage
That canne ymough of ſuche vſage
Withoutten her maye no wyght ſpede
Thus wende/ wythin for wodde ne drede
Therfore is good ye foi her ſende
For thoughe her maye thus wyde wende.

O Dydyngez/ my mother the goddeſſe
That is my lady/ and my maiſtreſſe
Sye nat al at my wylſyng?
Se bothe nat all my beſyenge.
yet canne ſhe ſomtyme many laſſoun
Whan that her beſte my wyl ſeeme
As my rede is fyll to aſſente
But no we I thynke her nat to grette
My mother is ſlyr and of ſtylle hede
I bothe wordſhippe her/ and the drede
For who that wolde her nat be bonde
Shal it abye ry hoop or wonde
And natheleſſe/ yet abyde we
Hende aſkez her if ſhe wil be
And bere fyll wyſe ſhe ſhewe hymſelfe
I trowe ſhe wyl nat greue my ſelfe ſo ſore

My mother is of grete puiſſaunce
She hath many a ſotyl ſemblaunce
That coſte hath many a perſone in thin
Where I was not perfect yinne
And yet many ſayd it was my dede
But I coude neuer in ſhal ſtede
Se me ne ſpeth ſo make I the
That ſuche tonges ben falſe wiſh me
For why? the thynketh that in no wyſe
It maye be cleped but marchaundyſe.

O bye a cauſer blarke or whyte
And paye therfore/ than arte thou quite
The marchaunt oweth the right nought
Se thou him why thou it bought
I wol nat ſellyng dere penyng
For ſellyng aſketh no guerdonyng
Here ſythe no thanke/ ne no merite
That one gothe from that other al quite
But this ſellyng is nat ſemblable
For whan his horſe is in the ſtable
He maye it ſelle agayne parde
And wynnen on it/ ſuche happe maye be
Al maye the maiſtre nat leſe yinne
For at the leſt the wynne is his
Or elſe/ if it ſo betyde
That he wol dere his horſe to ryde
Yet is he ſorde ape of his horſe
But thylke chaffare is welle worſe
Here Drede entremetteth ought
For who ſo ſuche chaffare hath bought
He ſhal nat worſhyp ſo wyſely
That he ne ſhal leſe al ſikerly
Both the money/ and his chaffare
But the ſtilleſt of the mare
The purſe and profyte home ſhal
Certaynely the lyere ſhal leſe al
For he ne canne ſo ſure a lye
To have lordſhippe/ and ſoil maiſtry
Se have power to make lettyng
Neyther for preſte ne for pennyng
That of his chaffare manye fin
Another ſhal fynde as mochel yinne
If he wol pene as mochle as he
Of what reuenge ſo that it be
Or for right nought ſo hoppe maye
If he canne ſkatte for to for paye
Drede ſhan ſuche marchaundiſe kepe
No/ that ſuche is many a lyppe
Whan they bye ſuche thynge boyſtrelyp

There as they lese her good folysly
But nathelesse/this dare I saye
Why mother is nat wonte to paye
For she is neither so foole ne nyce
To entremate her of suche vyce
But truste wel/she shal paye al
That repent of his bargayne shal
Whan poureste putte him in distresse
Al were he schoter to Rychesse
That is for me in great pensyng
Whan she assenteth to my wylyng.

BVt my mother sayne Venus
And by her father Saturnus
That her ingendred by his syse
But nat vpon his wedded wyfe
yet wol I more vnto you swere
To make this thyng the suerer
Nowe by that sauthe/ and that beaute
That I owe to al my brethrene fre
Of whiche there nys wight vnder heuyn
That canne her fathers names neuyn
So dyuers and so many there be
That with my mother haue be pryue
yet wolde I swere for rubernesse
The Pose of helle to my wytnesse
Nowe drynke I nat this yere clarre
If that I lye/ or forswore be
For of the goddes the vsage is
That who so hym forswereth amys
Shal that yere drynke no clarre
Nowe haue I swore ynough parde
If I forswere me than am I lorne
But I wol neuer be forswore
Sithe Rychesse hath me sayed here
She shal abye that trespas ful dere
Atte leest waye but her anne
With swerde/ or sparth/ or gysarme
For certes sythe she louyth nat me
Fro thylke tyme that she maye se
The castel and the toure to shake
In soche tyme she shal a wake
If I maye grype a tytyse mamme
I shal so pulle hym/ if I canne
That he shal in a fewe stoundes
Lese al his marbres/ and his poundes
I shal him make his pese out synge
Dut they in the garner springe
Dur maydens shal ete plucke hoy so
That hym shal neden fetheres mo
And make hym selle his laude to spende
But he the bette canne hym defende.

DOor may hem make her loue of me
Al though they nat so wrighte be
That they maye sene me in despyte
I wol nat haue hem in despyte
No good may fatith hem/ as I gesse
For chyrche and seloury to ryche sse
That so canne chase hem and dispyse
And hem defende in soudyre wyse
They soury sul bette/ so god me spede
Than dothe the riche chynchy gride
And bene/ my good sayde) more stable
And trewer/ and more resonable
And therfore it suffyseth me
Her good herte/ and her beaute
They han my me sette al her thought
And therfore I forpet hem nought
I wol hem bunge in great noblesse
If that I were god of Rychesse
As I am god of Loue forsely
Suche rowthe vpon her playnt haue I
Therfore I muste his socour be
That payneth hym to serue me
For if he deyde for lone of this
Than seneth my me no foute there is

Sir sayde they/ sothe is euerydele
That ye reherce/ and we wote wele
Thylke otthe to holde is resonable
For it is good and conuenable
That ye ony riche may hem saume
For sir/ thus wote we wel befalle
If riche may done you homage
That is as soules done outrage
Dut ye shal nat forswore be
Ne sette therfore to dyspite clarre
Or pyment maked fresshe and newe
Ladyes shal hem suche pepyr dresse
If that they sal my to hem trace
That they for wo wo we sayne alas
Ladyes shulden euer so curteise be
That they shal quyte your otthe al fre
Ne seketh nouse other buraye
For they shal speke with hem so fayre

The

That ye shal holden your pepde ful wele
Though ye your owne neuere a dele
Lat nobody wourche with your thynges
They shal hem tell so feire tydynges
And mourne hem eke so many requestes
By flatery/ that not fourth to
And therto your hem sothe thonkynges
What with dyssymg/ and with tokenynges
That restes if they two hod be
Shal neuere trouthe hem fonde ne se
That it nyll ao the wrecche faire
Of whiche they fust beguyled are
Loue may ye tell the al your wyll
And we your heestes shal fulfyll.

But false semblant bare not so drede
Of pan sir rumble hem of tho dede
For he sayde/ that pe ben bio fa
Be not/ if pe wol wourke hem wo
Wherfore we praye you al beausire
That ye forgyue hem no we your ire
And that ye may dwell as your many
With Bost poeuer sho bere semmay
Thus our arrede and our wyll we se
Parfay sayd Loue/ I graunt it you
I wol wel holde hem for my man
So we let hem passe/ and be sothe ran
False semblant (quod Loue) ay thou wyst
I take the here to my seruyse
That thou our fromden helpe alway
And kyndely hem meyntes wyght we bay
But do thy wyght hem to refuse
And eke our enemyes that thou grouse
Thyne herthis wyght/ I graunt it the
Thy lyng of semblaus shalbe thou be
We wol that thou haue swiche honour
Certayne thou arte a false traytour
And eke a theefe/ sythe thou were bounde
A thousand tyme thou arte falsemde
But nathelesse in our herynge
To put our selfe out of wourpnge
I byde the eke hem/ wost thou ho we
By some generall signe wotte
In what place thou shalt semblaus be
If that many hast myssdon of the
And ho we may shal the best espye
For the to flee for to great maistryes
Lo ay what place we thyne semmynge

Sir I hem sal hemmes wourynge
That I hope wol pleased be
So that ye wolde wisp pite me
For if that I tell pon the sothe
I may haue horme and shame bothe
If that my felo hmes wyste it
Thy tales shulden me be quyt
For certayne they wolde hate me
If euer I wourne her cruelte
For they wolde ouer al holde hem styll
Of trouthe/ that is agayne her wyll
Swiche tales hopen they not here
I myght estsone hope it sal here
If I sayd of hem any thyng
That aught displeasaunce to her herynge
For what wonde that hem pourse or byteth
Ay that wonde none of hem delyteth
Al were it gospel the euangyle
That wolde reproue hem of her gyle
For they are cruell and fantayne
And this thyng wote I wel certayne
If I spoke aught to paye her loos
Your courte shal wat so wel be cloos
That they ne shal wyte it at last
Of good men am I nought agast
For they wol taken on hem nothyng
Whan that they knowe al my meanyng
But he that wol it on hem take
He wol hem selfe suspecious make
That he hin syfe lat commyly
In gyle and in Ipocrisy
That me engendred and pourc fostryng
They made a ful good engendring
(Quod Loue) for who so sothly tell
They engendred the dyuel of hell.

But nedely/ ho we so euer it be
(Quod Loue) I hym and charge the
To tell anone thy wourynge plesa
Herynge eke hought that in this place is
And what syfe that thou spurn also
Hyde it no lenger nother lesse ne
Thou must hisonne al thy wourynge
Ho we thou sonnest and of what thyng
Though that thou studiest for thy sothe seyng
Dey also beating and to beatne
And yet ouer thou must pourbe
But nathelesse though thou hating be

Thou

Thou shalt not be the first that so
Hath for soothfawnesse suffered wo.

Sir/ sythe that it may hyghen you
Though that I shulde be slayne right no we
I shal done your commaundement
For therto haue I great talent.

Withouten wordes mo/ right than
False Semblant his sermon began
And sayd hem thus in audyence
Barons/ take hede of my sentence
That wight that hyght to haue knowyng
Of False semblant/ ful of flatterying
He must in worldly folke him fele
And entre in the cloysters ebe
I won no where/ but in hem fewe
But not hyde euery/ soothe to saye
Shortly I wol herbero we me
There I hope best to hulstred be
And certainly/ hyderest hydyng
Is vndernith humblest clothyng
Relygious folke ben ful coverte
Secular folke ben more apperte
But natheless/ I wol not blame
Religyous folke/ ne hem diffame
In what habyte that euer they go
Religyon humble/ and trewe also
Wol I not blame/ ne dispyse
But I nyl looue it in no wyse
I meane of false relygious
That flouts ben/ and malycious
That wollen in any habyte go
And setten not her herte therto.

Relygious folke ben al pryue
Thou shalt not fynde one dispytous
They soupen not prude/ ne no fyry se
But humbly they wol fede her tyse
With whiche folke wol I nought be
And if I dwelt I sayne me
I may wel in hyr habyte go
But me were lener my necke a two
Than lede a purpose that I made
What couenaunt that euer I made
I dwell with hem that proude be
And ful of wyles and subtelte
That worshyp of this worlde coueyten
And great nede enuyous eyen haue
And gon and gaden great pyssemires
And purchace hem the acquyntaunces
Of men that mighty hyre may lenden
And fayne hem poore/ and hem selfe lenden
With good mouthe benygnes
And dissaue good wyne purpoos
And purche be pouert and beggesse
And spyllen hem selfe great excesse
With wyly nettes/ that they caste
It wol come fouler out at the laste
They ben fro clene religyon went
They make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule confusyon
I haue a robe of religyon
Than am I al religyous
This argument is al roughous
It is not worthe a crooked wurte
Habyt ne maketh neyther monke ne shrift
But clene hyse and deuocion
Maketh good men of religyon
Natheless/ there can none answere
How hygh that euer his herd he bere
With resoun wheiled neuer so fere
That gyle in brannches eutle therin ne
There can no wyght dyfynysse it so
That he dare say a worde therto.
But what herbero we that euer I take
Or what semblant that euer I make
I meane but gyle/ and falowe that
For right no more than gyldre our cat
(That awaiteth myce a rotten to dyspoyle)
Ne entende I but to begyle
Ne no wyght may/ by my clothyng
Wete with what folke in my dwellyng
Ne by my wordes yet parde
So soote and so plesaunt they be
Beholde the dedes that I do
But thou be blynde thou oughtest so
For harpe her wordes fro her dede
They thynke on gyle without drede
What maner clothyng that they were
Or what estate that euer they bere
Lered or lewde/ shrewe or frende
Knyght/ squyer/ burgeys/ or swayne.

Right thus begyle false semblant
Eche seuen I saw hym enchaunt

And brake his tale in his speakyng
As though he had hym tolde leasyng
And sayd: What deuel is that I here?
What foule haste thou to nempned here?
Haye men fynde religious
In worldly habytatious?
Ye sir/ it folowith nat that they
Shulde lede a wicked lyfe parfey
Ne nat therfore her soules lese
That hem to worldly clothes chese
For certes it were great pyte
Whoune maye in seculer clothes se
Flouryshen holy religious
Ful many a sayne in felde and towne
With many a virgyn glorious
Deuoute/ and ful religious
Han yped/ that cōmen clothe aye bereth
Yet sayntes neuertheleese they were
I cande reckē you many a tey
Ye/ welnygh al these holy women
That menne in churches herey and sene
Bothe maydens/ and these wyues eke
That haue ful many a fayre chylde here
Weared alwaye clothes seculere
And in the same dyden they
That sayntes were/ and ben alwaye.
¶ The. xi. thousande maydens dere
That here in heuen her virgines clere
Of whiche may rede in churche and syng
Were take in seculer clothyng
Whan they receyued martyrdome
And wonnen heuen into her home
Good herte maketh the good thought
The clothynge peneth ne reueth nought
The good thought and the worchyng
That maketh the religion flourysshyng
There lyeth the good religious
After the right entencion.

Who so toke a wethers fleyse
And wrapped a grehy wolfe therinne
For he shulde go with lambes white
Wenest thou not he wolde hem byte?
Yes: Neuertheless/ as he were wode
He wolde hem worry/ and drinke the blode
And wel the rather hem deuoure
For sithe they shulde not perceyue
His tregetrie/ and his cautele
They wolde hym fold ne se tho he sye.

If there be wolues of suche hewe
Amongre these apostles newe
Thou holy churche thou mayste be mayled
Sythe that thy cyte is assayled
Thorugh hypocrites of thyn owne table
God wot thy lordshyp is dountable
If they enforce it to wyte
That shulde defende it fro within
Who myght defence ayenst hem make
Without stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonel
Without assaylyng of pensel
And if god nyl dante it socour
But let renne in this colour
Thou must thy heresies letten be
Than is there nought/ but pelde the
Or pene hem trybute doutles
And holde it of hem to haue pees
But greater harme betyde the
That they al maister of it be
Wel conne they scorne the withall
By day stuffen they the wall
And al the nyght they mynen there
Nay/ thou plantey muste elswhere
Thyn impes/ if thou wolt fruite haue
Abyde not there thy selfe to saue.

But no we peace/ here I turne agayne
I wol no more of this thyng sayne
If I may passen me hereby
I myght maken you merry
But I wol hetey you alway
To helpe your frendes what I may
So they wollen my company
For they be shent al vtterly
But if so fall/ that I be
Ofte with hem/ and they with me
And eke my femynan mote they serue
Or they shal not my fauo deserue
Forsothe I am a false traytour
God myed me for a theef trechour
Forswome I am/ but wel nygh nowe
Wote of my gyle/ tyl it be dowe.

Thought me hath many one betrayed
That my treget neuer aperceyued
And yet betrayeth/ and shal perceyue

That

That my falsnesse shal neuer apeyre
But who so bothe/ if he wyse be
Him is ryght good be ware of me
But so slyghe is the apeyrepynge
That al to late cometh knowynge
For Protheus that coude him chaunge
In euery shappe/ homely and straunge
Coude neuer suche gyle ne treasoune
As I/ for I come neuer in toune
There as I myght knowen be
Though men me bothe myght here and se
Ful wel I canne my clothes chaunge
Take one/ and make another straunge
Nowe am I knyght/ nowe chaplayne
Nowe prelate/ and nowe chapelayne
Nowe preest/ nowe clerke/ and nowe foster
Nowe am I maister/ nowe scholere
Nowe monke/ nowe chanon/ nowe baylye
What euer myster manne am I.
Nowe am I prince/ nowe am I page
And canne by herte euery langage
Somtyme am I hoore and olde
Nowe am I ponge/ stoute/ and bolde
Nowe am I Robert/ nowe Robyn
Nowe frere myner/ nowe Jacobyn
And with me foloweth my foteby
To done me solace and company
That hight dame Abstynence/ and raigned
In many a queynt arraye fayned
Ryght as it cometh to her lykyng
I fulfyl al her desyrynge
Somtyme a womans clothe take I
Nowe am I a mayde/ nowe lady
Somtyme I am relygious
Nowe lyke an anker in an hous
Somtyme am I prouoste
And nowe a nonne/ and nowe abbesse
And go through al regiouns
Seknge al relygiouns
But to what order that I am sworne
I take the straiwe and beate the corne
To iolye folke I enhabyte
I aske no more but her habite
What wol ye more in euery wyse
Ryght as me lyste I me disguyse:
Wel canne I beare me vnder wede
Vnlyke is my worde to my dede
Thus make I in to my trappes fal
The people/ through my pleyinges al
That bene in christendome a lyue
I make assote/ and I make stryue
That no prelate may lette me
Al folke/ where euer they founde be
I not no prelate may done so
But it the Pope be/ and no mo
That made thilke establissyng
Nowe is not this a propre thyng?
But were my sleightes apeyred
As I was wonte/ and wolde thou wyte:
For I dyd hem a tregetry
But therof yeue I a lytel tale
I haue the sluer and the male
So haue I preched and eke shryuen
So haue I take/ so haue I yeuen
Through her folye/ husbonde and wyfe
That I lede right a iolyf lyfe
Through symplesse of the prelatye
They knowe not al my tregetrye.

But for as moche as many and wyfe
Shulde shewe her pryuetes her lyfe
Ones a yere/ as sayethe the boke
Er any wight his housel toke
Than haue I pryuileges large
That may of moche thyng discharge
For he may say right thus parde
Sir preest/ in shrifte I let it the
That he to whom that I am shryuen
Hath me assoyled/ and me geuen
Penaunce forthe for my syn
Whiche that I sonde me gilty in
Ne I me haue neuer entencion
To make double confession
Ne reherse eft my shrift to the
O shrift is right ynough to me
This ought the suffyse wele
Ne be not rebell neuer a dele
For certes/ though thou soddest it twyse
I wote no preest ne prelate bowne
That may to shrift eft me constrayne
And if they done I wol me playne
For I wote where to playne wele
Thou shalt not streyne me a dele
Ne enforce me/ ne not me trouble
To make my confessyon double
Ne I haue none affection

To haue double absolution
The first is right ynough to me
This latter assoyling quyte I the
I am vnbounde/what mayst thou fynde
Ought of my synnes me to vnbynde
For he that might hath in his honde
Of al my synnes me vnbonde
And if thou wolte me thus constrayne
That me mote nedes on the playne
There shal no mys imperpetll
Ne byshop/ne officiall
Done iugement on me/for I
Shal gone and playne me openly
Vnto my shrift fatther newe
That hygh Frere wolde vntrewe
And he shal chuse him for me
For I trowe he can hamper the
But lorde he wolde be wrothe withall
If any him wolde Frere wolfe call
For he wolde haue no pacience
But done al cruell vengience
He wolde his myght done at the lest
Nothyng spare for goddes herst
And god so wyse be my socour
But thou yeue me my sauyour
At Lester/whan it lyketh me
Without preasyng more on the
I wol forthe/and to him gone
And he shal housell me anon
For I am out of thy grutchyng
I kepe not deale with the nothyng
Thus may he shame him/that forsaketh
His parysshe preest/and to me taketh
And if the preest wol him refuse
I am ful redy him to accuse
And him punysshe and hamper so
That he his chirche shal forgo.

But who so hath in his kepyng
The consequence of suche shrewyng
Shal sene/that preest may neuer haue might
To knowe the confessour a right
Of him/that is vnder his cure
And this is ayenst holy scripture
That byddeth euery herde honest
Haue very knowyng of his herst
But poore folke that goo by strets
That haue no golde/ne siluer gret
Hem wolde I let to her purfate
Or let her preestes knowe her state
For to me right nought yeue they
And why it is/for they ne may
They ben so barre I take no kepe
But I wol haue the fatte shepe
Let parisshe preestes haue the lene
I yeue not of her harme a bene
And if that prelates grutche it
That oughtes neuer be in her wyt
To kepe her fatte benefices so
I shal yeue hem a strobe or two
That they shal lerne with force
per/bothe her myttre and her croce
Thus saye I hem/and haue do longe
By priuileges ben so stronge.

False Semblant wolde haue stynted here
But Loue ne made him no suche chere
That he was wery of his sawe
But for to make him glad and sawe
He said/Ye on more specially
Howe that thou seruest vntruely
Ye forthe/and shame the neuer a dele
For as thyn habyt sheweth wele
Thou seruest an holy heremyte
Sothe is/but I am but an ypocryte
Thou gost and purchest pouerte?
ye sir/but rychesse hath poste
Thou purchest abstynence also?
Sir/I wol spelen so mote I go
By paunche/of good meate and wyne
As shulde a maister of diuyne
For howe that I me poore fayne
yet al poore folke I disdayne.

I Loue better the acquayntaunce
Ten tymes of the kyng of Fraunce
Than of a poore man of mylde mode.
Though that his soule be also good
For whan I se beggers quakyng
Naked on myxyns al stynkyng
For hongre crye/and ete for care
I entrimet not of her fare
They ben so poore/and ful of pyne
They might not ones yeue me a dyne
For they haue nothyng but her lyfe
What shulde he yeue that lyketh his knyfe?

It is

It is but folly to entremete
To seke in houndes nest fatte mete
Lette beare hem to the spyttle anone
But for me/ comforte gette they none
But a riche syke vsurere
Wolde I vysyte and draw nere
Him wol I comforte and rebete
For I hoope of his golde to gete
And if that wicked dethe him haue
I wol go with him to his graue
And if there any reproue me
Why that I lette the poore be
Wost thou how we I not escape
I saye and swere hym ful rape
That riche menne han more triches
Of synne/ than han poore wrecches
And haunte of counsayle more myster
And therfore I wolde draw hem ner
But as great hurte/it maye so be
Hath a soule in right great powerte
As soule in great richesse forsothe
Al be it that they hurten bothe
For richesse and mendicitees
Bene cleped two extremytees
The meane is cleped Suffysaunce
There lyeth of vertue the aboundaunce
For Salomon ful wel I wote
In his Parables vs wrote
As it is knowe of many a wight
In his thyrtene chapiter right
God thou me kepe for thy powste
Fro richesse and mendycite
For if a riche manne him dresse
To thynke to moche on richesse
His herte on that so ferre is sette
That he his creatour dothe forgette
And him that beyggeth wol aye greue
Howe shulde I by his worde him leue
Vnneth that he nys a mysdeer
Forsworne/ or elis goddes eyer
Thus sayth Salomon sawes
Ne we fynde written in no lawes
And namely in our christen laye
Who so saithe ye/ I dare saye naye
That Christ/ ne his apostels dere
While that they walked in erthe here
Were neuer seen herbred beggyng
For they nolden beggen for nothyng

And right thus were men wont to teche
And if this wyse wolde it preche
The maysters of dyuynyte
Sometyme in Parys the cyte.

And if men walde there gayne appose
The naked texte and lette the glose
It myght soone assoyled be
For meanne maye wel the sothe se
That parde they myght asse a thynge
Plainly sothe without beggynge
For they weren goddes herdes dere
And cure of soules hadden here
They nolde nothyng begge her foode
For after Christ was done on rodde
With their proper handes they wrought
And with trauayle / and eke nought
They wonnen al her sustenaunce
And lyueden sothe in her penaunce
And the remenaunt pas alwaye
To other poore folkes alwaye
They neither vyleden tauerne ne halle
But they in houses smal with alle
A mighty man that canne and maye
Shulde with his honde and body alwaye
Wynne him his foode in labouring
If he ne haue rent or suche a thyng
Al though he be religyous
And gode to seruen curyous
Thus mote he done/ or do trespas
But if it be in certayne caas
That I can rehearse/if myster be
Right wel/whan the tyme I se.

Seke the boke of sayut Austyne
Be it in paper or perchamyne
There as he writte of these worckynges
Thou shalt fynde that none excusynges
A parfyte man ne shulde seke
By wordes/ ne by dedes eke
Al though he be religyous
And gode to seruen curyous
That he ne shall/ so mote I go
With propre handes/ and body also
Get his fode in labouring
If he ne haue propryete of thyng
Yet shulde he sell al his substaunce
And with his swynke haue sustenaunce

As

If he be parfyte in bonde
Thus han the bookes tolde me
For he that wol gone porely
And vseth it aye besely
To haunten other mennes table
Hete a trechour ful of fable
Ne he ne may by good reason
Excuse hym by his enchesoun
For why behoueth in some gyse
Oon sometyme ay goodes seruyse
To gone and purchasen her nede
They mote eaten/ that so ne dede
And slepe/ and eke do other thyng
So longe may they haue playeng
So may they eke her prayer bidde
Whyle that they werche her mete to wynne
Seynt Austyn wol therto assente
In thilke boke that I rewde
Iustinian eke/ that made lawes
Hath thus forbodeu by olde sawes.

No man/ by payne to be dred
Mighty of body/ to begge his brede
If he may swynke it for to gete
Men shulde hym rather mayme or bete
Or done of hym aperte vnlyker
Than suffren hym in suche malyce
They done not wel so mote I go
That taken suche almesse so
But if they haue some priuilege
That of the payne hem wol alege
But how we that it/ say I not fe
But if the pointe diserued be
For I ne were not sybetly
That they may haue it rightfully
But I wol not determyne
Of princes power/ ne bidyne
Ne by my worde comprehende I wyne
If it so ferre may stretche in this
I wol not entremete a bit
But I wolde that the holie fayrthe vnder
Who that taketh almesse/ that he
Deue to folke that nedy may be
Lame/ feble/ mery/ and bare
Poore/ or in suche manere care
That comen hyder hem nedes mote
For they haue no power thereto
He entreth his owne herytage

But if he be that made of thyng
And if ye suche a tresaunt fynde
Thaskyst hym wel if ye be fynde
But they wolde hate you parteaus
If ye sykten in her laas
They wolde eftsones do you scathe
If that they myght/ late or rathe
For they be not ful patient
That hem the worlde thus foule blent
And wetest wel/ that god bad
The good man sell al that he had
And folowe hym/ and to poore it yeue
He wolde not therfore that he lyue
To seruen hym in mendenee
For it was neuer his sentence
But he bad werken/ whan that nede is
And folowe hym in good dedes.
Seynt Poule/ that loued al holy churche
He bade the apostels for to wurche
And wynnen her lyuelode in that wyse
And hem defended truandyse
And sayd/ wirketh with your honden
Thus shulde the thyng be vnderstonden
He nolde iwys haue byd hem beggyng
Ne sellen gospel/ ne prechyng
Lest they deraste/ with her axyng
Folke of her catel or of her thyng
For in this worlde is many a man
That penseth his good/ for he ne can
Werne it for shame/ or ells he
Wolde of the asker delyuered be
And for he hym encombreth so
He penseth hym good to late hym go
But it ne may hym no thyng profyte
They lese the pese and the merye
The good folke that Poule to preched
Profred hym ofte/ when he hem teched
Some of her good in charyte
But therfore right nothyng take he
But of his honde labour wolde he gete
Clothes to wynne hym/ and his mete.

Wel wot thou so he a man may fynde
That al his good to poore folk penen
And wel but euele byde his bedes
And neuer wolle fonden fulfourme his nedes
Parye se do ye? Ye sir? And how?
But/ I wol glosyly tell you.

C. g. ii. Seynt

Seynt Austen sayth/a man may be
In houses that han propertie
As temples/and hospytelers
And as these chanons regulers
Or whyte monkes/or these blake
I wol no mo ensamples make
And take therof his sustenyng
For therin lythe no beggyng
But other wayes not yuus
Yet Austyn gabbeth not of this
And yet ful many a monke laboureth
That god in holy churche honoureth
For whan her swynkyng is agon
They rede and synge in churche anon.

And for there hath ben great discorde
As many a wight may beare recorde
Upon the estate of mendicience
I wol shortly in your presence
Tell howe a man may begge at nede
That hath not wher with him to fede
Maugre his felowes iangelynges
For soth fastnesse wol none hydynges
And yet parcase I may abey
That I to you sothly thus sey.

LO here the case especial
If a man be so bestyal
That he of no craft hath science
And nought desyreth ignorence
Than may he go a beggyng perne
Tyl he some maner craft can lerne
Through whiche without truandyng
He may in trouthe haue his lyuyng
Or if he may done no labour
For elde/or sickenesse/or langour
Or for his tendre age also
Than may he yet a beggyng go
Or if he haue peraventure
Through vsage of his nourture
Lyued ouer delycyously
Than oughten good folke comonly
Hay of his mischefe some pyte
And suffren him also/ that he
Way goy aboute and begge his breed
That he be not for honger dede
Or if he haue of craft conuyng
And strength also/ and desyryng
To worchen/as he had wont
But he synde neyther this ne that
Than may he begge tyl that he
Haue geten his necessyte
Or if his wynnyng be so lyte
That his labour wol not acquyte
Suffysaunt ly al his lyuyng
yet may he go his breed beggyng
Fro doore to doore/he may go trace
Tyl he the remenant may purchace
Or if a man wolde vndertake
Any empryse for to make
In the cesyons of our lay
And it defenden/ as he may
De it with armes/or lettrure
Or other conuenable cure
If it be so he poore be
Than may he begge/tyll that he
Way synde in trouthe for to swynke
And get him clothe/meate/and drinke
Swynke he with his hondes corporell
And not with hondes espyrituell.

IN al this case/and in semblables
If that there ben no resonables
He may begge/as I tell you here
And els not/in no manere
As Willyam Seynt Amour wolde preche
And ofte wolde dispute and teche
Of this mater al openly
At Parys ful solempnly
And also god my soule blesse
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The accorde of the vniuersite
And of the people/as semeth me.

No good man ought it to refuse
Ne ought him therof to excuse
De wrothe or blythe/ who so be
For I wol speke/and tell it the
Al shulde I dye/and be put doun
As was seynt Poule in derke prisoun
Or be exyled in this caas
With wronge/as maystre William was
That my mother Hypocrise
Dampnyfied for her great emprise.

My mother semed him Seynt Amour
Thes nobles dyd suche labour

To susteyne ouer the hepalle
That he to mayde ouerde me
He made a bolle/and bid it wayte
Wherin his syre is lyde of waste
And wolde yefe rempes hongyng
And spued by my trouthe lyng
If I ne had rent ne other goode
What meneth he that I were woode?
For labour mighte me neuer plese
I haue more wyt to lerne at ese
And haue wel lesser/selde to say
Before the people patter and pray
And wirke me by my sogrette
Under a cope of popelardie.

(Dō Lone) what byndi in this that I here
What wordes telleth thou me here
What sir Falsnesse that apert is
Than diredest thou not god? No certis
For selde in great thyng shal he spede
In this worlde/that god wol drede
For selde that hem to vertue penen
And truely ay her owne hyre
And hem in goodnesse ape contene
Dy hem is lyte thryfte yfene
Suche folke drinken great mischefe
That lyte may me neuer plese
But se what golde hath vsurers
And lyuer elle in garners
Aduocates/and these mayres
Bayliffes/bedelle/promoss/countours
These lyuen wel aboue by reuyne
The smale people hem moste enclyne
And they as wolues wol hem eten
Upon the poore folke they geten
Ful worthe of that they spende or lese
Lyte wone of hem that he nyl stryue
And wone hem selfe wol ne thryue
Without stalo pray/they hem pull
The stronge the feble ouerguelle
But I that weare my symple clothe
Rolle beste/wallowe and rubbeouth
And gyle gabbe/and lyghtere
Dy my trouthe I gaynere and chaffe
The great trespasse is to my charge
That speth with me so sayde bonnche
Dye sayde pelycan be I counsaile
Both my scholers I shall yeue
With wyne of reflion/al my wyll
And tables ful of entremets
I wol nat hyre/but mete and pens
And wynne gelde to spende also
For whan the great begge is go
I conneth right wath my tapes
Hade I not wel tonsille myn apes
To wynnen is al my entent
Dy purchace is better than my rent
For though I shulde beten be
Ouer al I entremet me
Without me may no wight durre
I walke soules for to cure
Of al the worlde cure haue I
In drede and seruyse boldly
I wol bolde preche/and the comfortyng
With handes wyl I not tranayling
For of the Pope I haue the bull
I me holde not my wyttes dull
I wol not stynten in my lyue
These Emperours for to shriue
Of lynges/dukes/and lordes grete
But poore folke al quyte I lete
I lone no suche shrywyng parde
But it for other cause be
I recke not of poore men
Her astate is not worthe an hen
Where fyndest thou a symylere of labour
Haue me vnder his confessour:
But Empresses/and duchesses
These quenes/and the countesses
These abbesses/and the bygyns
These great ladyes palasyns
These nolye burgeises/and bayliues
These nonnes/and these burgeys wyues
That reche lyte/and the pleasyng
And these maydens wedlayeng
Where so they clad or naked be
Dercomes ayded quelle there none fro me
And for her soules sauete
At shrift and tyme/and her mayne
I assoyle/whan they lyen to me shrine
The pompes of al her lyue
And make hem trowe/bothe mayde and wyue
Her purgatorie payneth nyte but a bleyn
Apens me and my company
That shrewes ben/as great (as I)
For whyche I wold not lyue in solde

No pryuite that we is tolde
That I by worde or signe plese
Ne wol make hem knowe what it is
And they wollen also tellen me
They hele fro me no pryuite
And for to make you hem parceyuen
That vsen folke thus to deceyuen
I wol you sayne without drede
What manne maye in the Gospel rede
Of sayne Mathue the gospelere
That sayethe/ as I shal you saye here.

Upon the chayre of Moyses
Thus it is closed doutles
(That is the olde Testament
For therby is the chayre ment)
Sytte Scribes and Pharyseys
That is to sayne/ the cursed meys
Whiche that we Hypocrites call
Dothe that they preche I rede you all
But dothe nat as they done a dele
That bene nat wery to saye wele
But to do wel/ no wyl haue they
And they wolde bynde on folke alwaye
That bene to begyled able
Burdons that ben unportable
On folkes shulders thynges they couchen
That they wyl with her fyngers touchen
And why wol they nat touche it why?
For hem ne lyste nat sykerly
For sadde burdons that men taken
Make folkes shulders aken
And if they do ought that good be
That is for folke it shulde se
Her burdons larger maken they
And make her hemmes wyde alwaye
And louen seates at the table
The fyrste/ and most honorable
And for to haue the fyrste chayne
In synagogges/ to sitte ful dere is
And wollen that folke hem loute and grete
Whan that they passen throughe the strete
And wollen be cleped maysters also
But they ne shulde nat wollen so
The gospel is there agayns I gesse
That sheweth wel her wickednesse.

Another custome vse we
Of sayne that wol agrefe vs se
We hate him deedly euerychone
And we wol werrey him/ as one
Him that one hateth/ hate we al
And conierte/ so we to done him fal
And if we sene him wynne honour
Richesse or puyssé/ throughe his valour
Prouende/ rente/ or dignyte
Ful faste pyne compassen we
By what ladder he is doungen so
And for to maken him do wrong to go
With trayson we wol him defame
And done him lese his good name
Thus from his ladder we him take
And thus his frendes soen we make
But worde ne wite shal he noon
Tyl al his frendes bene his foon
For if we dyd it openly
We myght haue blame redily
For hadde he wyste of our malyce
He hadde him kepte/ but he were nyce.

Another is this/ that if so fall
That there be one amonge vs all
That dothe a good tourne/ out of drede
We sayne it is our alder dede
Ye sykerly/ though he it sayned
Or that him lyste/ or that him dayned
A manne throughe him anounced be
Therof al partiners be we
And tellen folke/ where so we go
That manne throughe vs is sprongen so
And for to haue of manne playsyng
We purchace throughe our flatterynge
Of riche men/ of great power
Letters/ to witnesse our honour
So that manne weneth that mepe be we
That al vertue in vs be
And alwaye praise we vs be sayne
But ho we so that we begge or playne
We bene the folke without lesynge
That al thynges haue without askynge
Thus be we deuoute of the people praysed
And gladly my purpose is thus.
I deele with no money/ but I
Haue golde and treasour great plente
Her arquerynounce wel I know
This is mocke my lesse shendly
I entremete me of marchaundye

I wote

I make peace/ and marriages
I am gladly occasioner
And many tymes a procuratrice
I am sometyme messagere
That saluth not to my myscheue
And many tymes I make compasse
For me that office is not honest
To deale with other mennes thynge
That is to me a great hyndrynge
And if that ye shuld aught to by
In place that I reporte to
I shal it spoyle through my byte
As soone as ye shall take me it
So that ye serue me to pay
Thy seruyce shal be poure alwaye
But who so wol chaffer me
Anone my loue lesse hath he
For I loue no maner in no gyse
That wol me reprouer or chastise
But I wolde al folke vnbridle
And of no wight no teachynge take
For I that other folke chastye
Wol nat be taught for my folye.

I Loue none heremytage more
Al desertes/ and holtes hoore
And grene wooddes merrythoure
I sette hem to the Deptyst floore
I quetch hem quyte and hem releasse
Of Egipte al the wylderneesse
To serue were al my mansyons
Fro al cytees and good townes
Thy paleys and myne house make I
There neuene maye come in equally
And sure that I the warde forsake
But al amydde I byde/ and wake
Thy house/ and myne house I make
Dette than a fryssh castle wolde stonde.

OF Antrech is that neuene any I
Of whome that Christ so ofte openly
They haue Sathyn of Sathynesse
And synners of suche wickednesse
To the toppe/ of their habitacles
Of the Euangelystes boocles
There myght he se by great euydence
Ful many suche compayrysons
As ye shal se hereafter in this boocke.

Be it of beste or of fysshe
The sonne semeth euer the moore
That troubleth not and chaungeth noone
And the water spoyl the shelle
I shoone nat that I you telle
Right so vnfoulen any gyle
Surmounteth this noble Euangyle
The worde of any Euangelyst
And to her tytell they to[illegible] Christ
And many suche compary[illegible]
Of whome I make no mencioun
Thyght meane in that booke fynde
Who so conde of hem haue wynde.

The Vnryuersyte that tho was a slepe
Gan for to braydc/ and taken kepe
And at the myght the hood vp caste
Ne neuer sythen slepte it faste
But vp it sterte/ and armes toke
Ayenst this false harrylde booke
Al redy batayle for to make
And to the Juge the booke they take
But they that knoughten the booke there
Hant it doone a wape for fere
They nolde shewe it no more a deele
But clapt it depe/ and depen wele
Tyll suche a tyme that they maye se
That they so strange wayen be
That no wight maye hem wel withstonde
For bp that booke they durst nat stonde
Awaye they gonne it for to lere
For they ne durste not answere
Ey oppositioun no glose
To that that clerkes wol oppose
Ayenst the cursednesse p'mes
That in that booke written is
No lne wotte I nat/ ne I can nat se
What maner ende that there shal be
Of al this that they fynde
But yet alpate they shal abyde
Tyl that they maye it sette defende
This to we I beste wol be here ende.

Thus Antechrist shapeth we
For we beware of his meyne
And wheat comune that wol nat be so
Right soone he shal his lyst for go
But wende Lucifer semeth me

Ful of goodnesse and of pyte
And inwarde we withouten fable
Bene gredy Wolues rauysable
We enuyron bothe londe and see
With al the worlde werreyen we
We wol ordayne of al thynge
Of folkes good/ and her lyuyng.

If there be castell or cyte
Wherin that any bougerons be
Al though that they of thyllayne were
For therof bene they blamed there
Or of a wyght out of measure
Wolde leane her golde/ and take vsure
For that he is so coueytous
Or if he be to Lecherous
Or these that haunten Simonye
Or Prouost ful of trechery
Or Prelate lyueng ioliyse
Or preest that halte his queyn hym by
Or olde hoores hostyleres
Or other bandes or bordelleres
Or elo blamed of any vyce
Of whiche men shulden done iustyce
By al the sayntes that we prey
But they defende them with lamprey
With luce/ with elys/ with samons
With tendre gees/ and with Capons
With tartes/ or with chesses fatte
With depntie flaunes/ brode and flatte
With caleweys/ or with pullayle
With conynges/ or with fyne vitayle
That we vnder our clothes wyde
Maken through our golet glyde
Or but he wol do come in haste
Roe Benyson bake in paste
Whether so that he loure or gropne
He shal haue of a corde a lopne
With whiche men shal him bynde and lede
To brenne him for his synful dede
That men shul here hym crye and roie
A myle way aboute and more
Or elo he shal in prison dye
But if he wol his frendshyp lye
Or smerten that/ that he hath do
More than his gylte amounteth to
But and he coutise/ through his slyghte
Do maken vp a loure of heyghte
Haughte rought/ I beheet of stone or tre
Of erthe/ or turues though it be
Though it were of no bounde stone
Wrought with squyre and scantilone
So that the tour were stuffed well
With al ryches/ se temporell
And than that he wolde vp dresse
Engynes/ bothe more and lesse
To caste at hem by euery syde
To bere his good name wyde
Suche slenghtes I shal you nemen
Barels of wyne/ by fyue or seuen
Or golde in sackes great plente
He shulde soone delyuered be
And if he haue no suche pyteuces
Let hym study in equipolences
And lette lyes/ and sallaces
If that he wolde deserue our graces
Or we shal beare hym suche witnesse
Of synne/ and of his wretchednesse
And done his lose so wyde renne
That al quicke we shulde him brenne
Or elo yeue hym suche penaunce
That is wel worse than the pytaunce.

For thou shalte neuer for nothyng
Loy knowen a right by her clothyng
The traitours ful of trechetye
But thou her werkes can aspye
And ne had the good keeping be
Wysdom of the Emperesse
That keepeth the key of cristendome
We had ben tormented al and some
Suche ben the synnyng prophetes
Kys none of hem/ that good prophete is
For they through wicked entendyng
The yere of the incarnacion
A thousande/ and fiue hundred yere
Fyue and fyfty/ ferther ne nere
Drought forth a boke/ with sory grace
To yeuen ensample in commune place
That sayd thus/ though it were fable
This is the Gospel perdurable
That fro the Holy goost is sent
Wel were it worthe to ben lent
Enspired was my suche manere
This boke/ of whiche I telle here
There nas no wight in al Parys

Before

Before our Lady al prouve
That they ne myght the booke by
The sentence pleased hem wel verily.
But I wol speke of this matere
For it is wonder longe to here
But habbe that pite bode coloured
Of better estate I were confused
And frendes have I pet perde
That han me set in great degre.

Of al this worlde is Emperour
Ofte my father the traytour
And Empresse my mother is
Hanger the Holy goste iwys
Our mighty kynge and our soule
Reigneth in euery regne aboute
And wel is worthy he magnifyed be
For al this worlde governe he
And can the folke so wel discryue
That none our gyle can perceyue
And though they done they dare not say
The sothe dare no wight bewray
But he my Christes wrathe hem sheweth
That more than Christ my brethern diedeth
He nys no fel good champion
That diedeth suche fenestracion
Nor that for payne wol refuse
Vs to correcte and accuse
He wol not entremete by myght
Se have god in his eye sight
And therfore god shal hem punyce
But me ne recheth of no vyce
Ayther men be louen commendely
And holden vs for so worthy
That we may folke reprene echone
And we nyll have reprefe of none
Whom shulden folke maistryen so
But he that sytteth aboue vs
To punysshe that folke may he wel
Though it not so behynde hem be.
And where as many hoode folye
Then in religious clothynge
And some nobles many gode goy
That inly clothes weren of wolle
If they be suche folke as they seme
So clene as any lily flour
And that her hertes sothe bin her bele
It is great pyte out of reule

For they wol be mone hypocrite
Of hem me thenketh great spyte is
I cayne not some hem on no syde
But beggers with these hoodes wyde
With slenge and pale faces seare
And grape clothes not ful cleane
But fretted ful of tatarwagges
And toggle sleeues knopped with daggers
That frouncen lyke a quaple pype
Or hootes tyrelypyp as a gype
To suche folke as I you deuyse
Shulde princes and these lordes wyse
Take al her londes and her thynges
Bothe warre and peace in gouernynges
To suche folke shulde a prince hem yeue
That wolde his lyfe in honour lyue.

And if they be not as they seme
That semen thus the worlde to queme
There wolde I dwelle to discryue
The folke for they shal not parceyue
But I ne speke my no suche wyse
That may shulde humble habyte dispyse
So that no pride there vnder be
No manne shulde hate as thynketh me
The poore man in suche clothynge
But god ne pieryseth hem nothynge
That saith he hath the worlde forsake
And hath to worldely glorie hem take
And wol of suche despyses vse
Who maye that beggar wel excuse?
That papelarde that hem yeldeth so
And wol to worldely ease go
And saith that he the worlde hath lefte
And gredily it gryppeth efte
He is the hounde shame is to sayne
That to his castynge gothe ageyne.

But vnto you dere I not spe
But myght I selue ones espye
That ye peruerted it nothynge
Ye shulde have a starke lasynge
Right in youre londe thus to begynne
I nolde it lette for no synne
The god laughe at the wonder tho
And euery wyght gonne laughe also
And sayde: Lo here a maner aright
For to be trusty to euery wight.

Lest

HAsse semblaunt (q Loue) say to me
Sythe I thus haue anamored the
That in my counte is thy dwellyng
And of thy bandes shall be my lyng
Wolt thou wel holden my forwardes?
ye sir/ from hence forwardes
We wol a people vpon hym areyse
And throughe out gyle/done hym reise
And hym on sharpe speares tyne
Or other wayes bynge hym fro tyne
But if that he wol folowe vs
That in our booke written is.

THus mothe wol our booke signifye
That whyle Peter hath maistrye
Way neuer Jolyas shewe wel his myght
Nowe haue I you declared right
The meanyng of the barbe and tynde
That maketh the entencions blynde
But nowe at erst I wol begyn
To expowne you the pythe within
And the setulere comprehende
That Chuistes lawe wol defende
And shulde it kepen and mayntenen
Ayenst hem that al fustenen
And falsly to the people techen
That Jolyas betoketh hem to prechen
That there nys lawe couenable
But thilke gospel parduable
That fro the holy goste was sent
To turne folke that ben miswent.

The strength of Jolyas they vnderstonde
The grace in whiche they say they stonde
That dothe the synful folke conuerte
And hem to Jesu christ reuerte
Ful many an other horrible lete
Way men in that booke se
That ben comaunded doutelesse
Ayenst the lawe of Rome expresse
And al with Antechust they holden
As men may in the boke beholden
And thilke comaunden they to flee
Al tho that with Peter ben
But they shal neuer haue that myght
And god to forne/ for stryue to fyght
That they ne shal ynough fynde
That Peters lawe shal haue in mynde
And euer holde/ and so mayntene
That what the sleight it shal be seene
That they shal of couse thereto
For aught that they may excuse or do
And thilke lawe shal not stonde
That they by Jolyas haue vnderstonde
But maugre hem/ it shal abeye
And ben brought to confusyon
Had neuer yow father hem bifore
Seruaunt so trewe/ sythe he was borne
That is apenst al nature
Sir/ put you in that auenture
For though ye bote haue taste of me
The yborre shal ye neuer be
For hostagre/ as yberneste
Or chartres/ for to beare witnesse
I take your fayth to recrede here
That men ne may in no maniere
Lette the wolfe out of his hyde
Tyl he be slayne/ backe and syde
Though men hym beate and alcrepe
What wene ye that I wol begyle?
For I am clothed mekely
Vnder is al my treachery
Myn herte chaungeth neuer the mo
For none habyte that I go
Though I haue cheer of symplenesse
I am not werp of slouthfulnesse
My lemman/ stedfast obseruaunce
Hath myster of my purueyaunce
She had ful longe ago be bede
Nere my counsayle and my rede
Let her alone/ and you and me
And Loue answerde/ I truste the
Without bote/ for I wol none
And false semblaunt the thefe anone
Right in that hise seme place
That had of treson al his face
Right blacke within/ and whyte without
Thanked hym/ gan on his waye loute.

Thay was there nought/ but murymake
Nowe to assaute/ that sayden they
(Quod Loue) and that ful hardely
Thay armed they hem ouerthy
Of suche armoures as hem fell
Whan they were armed/ fiers and fell
They went hem forthe al in a route.

And

And set the castel all aboute
They wyll not alwey for me byde
Tyll it so be that they han lyste
Or tyll they haue the castel take
And fourt batels they gan make
And pyght hem in fourt away
And toke her way / and forth they gone
The fourt gate for to assaylle
Of whiche the Pygrym wel nere fayled
For they ben nere that sholde me bede
But hardy folke and strenge in dede.

Now we wyll Abstynence the strenge mayster
Of Falle semblant and Abstynaunce
That ben to Wicked tonge wente
But fyrst they token her parlement
Whether it so done were
To maken hem be knowe there
Or els wythin for the disgysed
But at the laste they demyded
That they wolde gone in tapynage
As it were nye pylgrymage
Lyke good and holy folke in semynde
And dame Abstynence forbynde
To bere on a rode of Lorayne
And gay her gratche on a lyseyne
A large cowyr chefe of thrabe
She wrapped al aboute her hede
But she forgate not her glasynge
A payre of beedes eke she hange
Upon a lace al of whyte threde
Of whiche that she her beedes bede
But she ne bought hem neuer a dele
For they were gyuen her / I wote wele
God wote of an hot holy herte
That sayd he wolde her sorowes smerte
To whom she had of hym more
Than any frere of his ordre
And he bysyed him eke
And many a sermon a good for to
He wolde let for nought on hande
That he ne wolde han of her shame
And with so grete deuocyon
They made her confessyon
That they had of her forgyuenesse
Two herdes in two hondes at ones
Of whyte shepe I beleue for the
But pale of hem semeden wele be

That false treytoursse Satanye
Was lyke that false hors of Troye
That in the Apocalipse is shewed
That signifyeth to falle beleeuers
That ben al ful of sleyghtes
And pale / through hypocrysye
For on that horse no colour is
But onely dede and pale of hewe
Of suche a colour enlangoured
Was Abstynence thys coloured
Of her estate she her repented
As her vysage represented
She had a burnet mantel of theffe
That Gyle had yeue her of his yefte
And a scrippe of sayntè distresse
That ful was of clungernesse
And forthe she walked sobrely
And False semblant fayre / le vous dy
And as it were for suche maysters
Done on the cope of a frere
With chere symple / and ful pytous
His sokyng was not disdeynous
Ne proude / but meke and ful pesyble
About his nekke he bare a Dyble
And squerely / forthe gan he gon
And for to rest his tymmes vpon
He had of treason a potent
As he were feble / his way he went
But in his sleue he gan to thrust
A rasour sharpe / and wel bytyng
That was forged in a forge
Whiche that men clepen Lompe gorge
So longe forthe her waye they nomen
Tyll they to Wicked Tonge comen
That at his gate was syttyng
And sawe folke in the way passyng
The pylgrymes for we he sayle by
That verry hem ful meekely
And humbly they with him mette
Dame Abstynence fyrst him grette
And sythe him / False semblant salued
And he hem / but he not remued
For he ne dradde him not a dele
For whan he sawe her faces wele
Alway in herte him thought he
He shulde han wel hem bothe two
For wel he knewe dame Abstynence
But he ne knewe not Countrefaunce

He knewe nat that she was constrayned
Ne of her thewes lyfe fayned
But wende she come of wyl al free
But she come in another degree
And if of good wyl she begonne
That wyl was sayled her thonne.

And Falce Semblant had he sayne alse
But he knewe nat that he was falce
yet falce was he/ but his falsnesse
Ne conde he nat espye/ nor gesse
For Semblant was so slye wrought
That falseneſſe he nat espyed nought
But haddest thou knowen hym before
Thou woldest on a boke hane swore
Whan thou hym sangh in thylke araye
That he/ that whilome was so gaye
And of the daunce Joly Robyn
Was tho become a Jacobyn
But sothely what so menne hym nat
Frere pierhoures bene good menne al
Her order wickedly they berry
Suche mynstrelles/ if they werry
So bene Augustyns/ and Cordyleers
And Carmes/ and eke Barbed freres
And al freres shodde and bare
Though some of hem ben great and square
Ful hoolymen/ as I hem deme
Euerychc of hem wolde good man seme
But shalte thou neuer of apparence
Bene concluded good consequence
In none argument y wis
If existens al fayled is
For menne maye fynde al waye sophisme
The consequence to euenesse
Who so that hath hadde the subtelte
The double sentence for to se.

Whan the pylgrymes comen were
To Wicked Tonge that dwelled there
Her harneys nygh hem was al gate
By Wicked tonge ado wne they sate
That badde hem nere hym for to come
And of tidynges telle hem some
And sayd hem; What cause maketh you
To come in to this place nowe?

Sir sayd Betrayed Abstynaunce
We for to dryue our penaunce
With ferres pytous and lowlyche
Art couthe/ as pylgrymes ought to be
Wel nygh on foote al weye we go
Ful doughtely hem coud fynden tho
and thus bothe we bere swete
Throughout this worlde that is mysshapen
To poure enfourmed/ and parfite alse
To fyssshen spyrytuel mennes we go
For other fyssh nyse/ ne fysshe we
And sir/ for that charyte
As we be bounden herbowe we crave
Your lyfe to amende Cryst it sende
And so it shulde you nat displease
We wolden/ if it were your ease
A shorte sermon vnto you seyne
And Wicked Tonge answered ageyne
The house (quod he) suche (as ye se)
Shal nat be watned you for me
Say what you lyst/ and I wol here
Graunt mercy swete sir dere.

(Quod alderfirst) dame Abstynence
And thus began she her sentence
Sir/ the firste vertue certayne
The greatest/ and moste soueraygne
That may be founde in any man
For haunyng/ or for worlde he can
That is bis longe to refrayne
Therto ought every wight fayn payne
For it is better fyrst be
Than for to spoken harme parde
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no good man sykerly
And sir/ aboven al other fyrme
In that arte thou maiste gilty seme
Thou spake a iape/ not longe ago
And sir/ that thou ought nost do
Of a ponge man/ that sore trayned
And neuer yet this place apayned
Thou saydest he a lumpish nothyng
But to disayne thy lyfe vntrompyng
Ye sayd nothyng soothe of that
But sir/ pe se/ I tel you plat
He ne cometh no more/ne gooth parde
I trowe ye shal hym neuer se
Fayre Welcomyng in purpos is
That ofte hath played with you at this
The fayrest games that he coude

Whyle

Without sylthe syst or sounde
So we dare she not her selfe socoure
Ye shall also the mayne do chace
That he dare neyther come ne go
What meueth you to hate him so?
But properly your mased thought
That many a false leasyng hath wrought
That meueth your foole eloquence
That iangleth euer on enuyous
And on the folke arrayeth blame
And dothe hem dishonour and shame
For thynge that maye haue no parying
But yuel yuel wille/ and enuyenge.

For I dare sayne/ that Reason demeth
Ius nat al sothe ys yuge that semeth
And it is fynne to contrayne
Thynge that is to reprouue
Thus wote ye wele/ and sir therfore
Ye arne to blame the more
And natheles/ he recheth lyte
He peueth nat no we therof a myte
For if he thought harme parfaye
He wolde cease and gone al daye
He coude him selfe nat abstene
No we cometh he nat/ and that is sene
For he me taketh of it no cure
But if it be through auenture
And lasse than other folke algate
And thou her watchest at the gate
With speare in thyne ouer al waye
There muse musarde al the daye
Thou wakest nyght and day for thought
Thus thy trauayle is for nought
And I louse the without fayle
Shal neuer quyte the thy trauayle
And slatthe in/ that sayst welcoming
Without any trespassyng
Shal wrongfully in prison be
There wepeth and complayneth he
And though thou neuer yet yuis
Agyltest manne no more but thus
Take nat a greue it were worthy
To putte the out of this bayly
And afterwarde in prison lye
And setten the yel that thou dye
For thou shalte for this synne dwelle
Right in the deuels arse of helle

But if that thou repent the
Mayeye/ thou spekst falsely (quod he)
What/ welcome mote my chaunce no we
Haue I therfore herberd you
To saye me shame/ and eke reprone
With soyre sappe to your bedone
Am I to day your herbegere
Go herber you els where/ thay here
That hay a yper called me
Two tregetours arte thou and he
That in myn house/ do me this shame
And for my sothe saue ye me blame
Is this the sermon that ye make?
To al the deuels I me take
Or els god thou me confounde
But er myn dydden this castel founde
It passeth not thy dayes or twelue
But it was tolde right to my selue
And as they sayd/ right so tolde I
He kysse the Rose pouche
Thus sayd I no we/ and haue sayd yore
I not where he dyd any more
Why shulde men say me suche a thyng
As it had ben gabbyng
Right so sayd I/ and wol saye yet
I trowe I yed not of it
And with my hemes I wol blowe
To al neyghbours and we
Knowe he hath bothe comen and gone
The spake False semblant right anone
Al is not gospel out of boute
That men sayne in the towne aboute
Lap na derse ere to my spekyng
I swere you sir/ it is gabbyng.
I trowe ye wote wel certaynly
That no man loueth him tenderly
That sayth him harme if he wote it
Al be he neuer so poore of wyt
And sothe is also ysayth
This knowe ye sir/ as wel as I
That louers gladly wol bysyen
The place there her loues haboyen
This may you loueth/ and eke honoureth
This may to serue you laboureth
And espeth you his frende so dere
And this may maketh you good chere
And euery where that you meteth
He you salueth/ and he you greteth

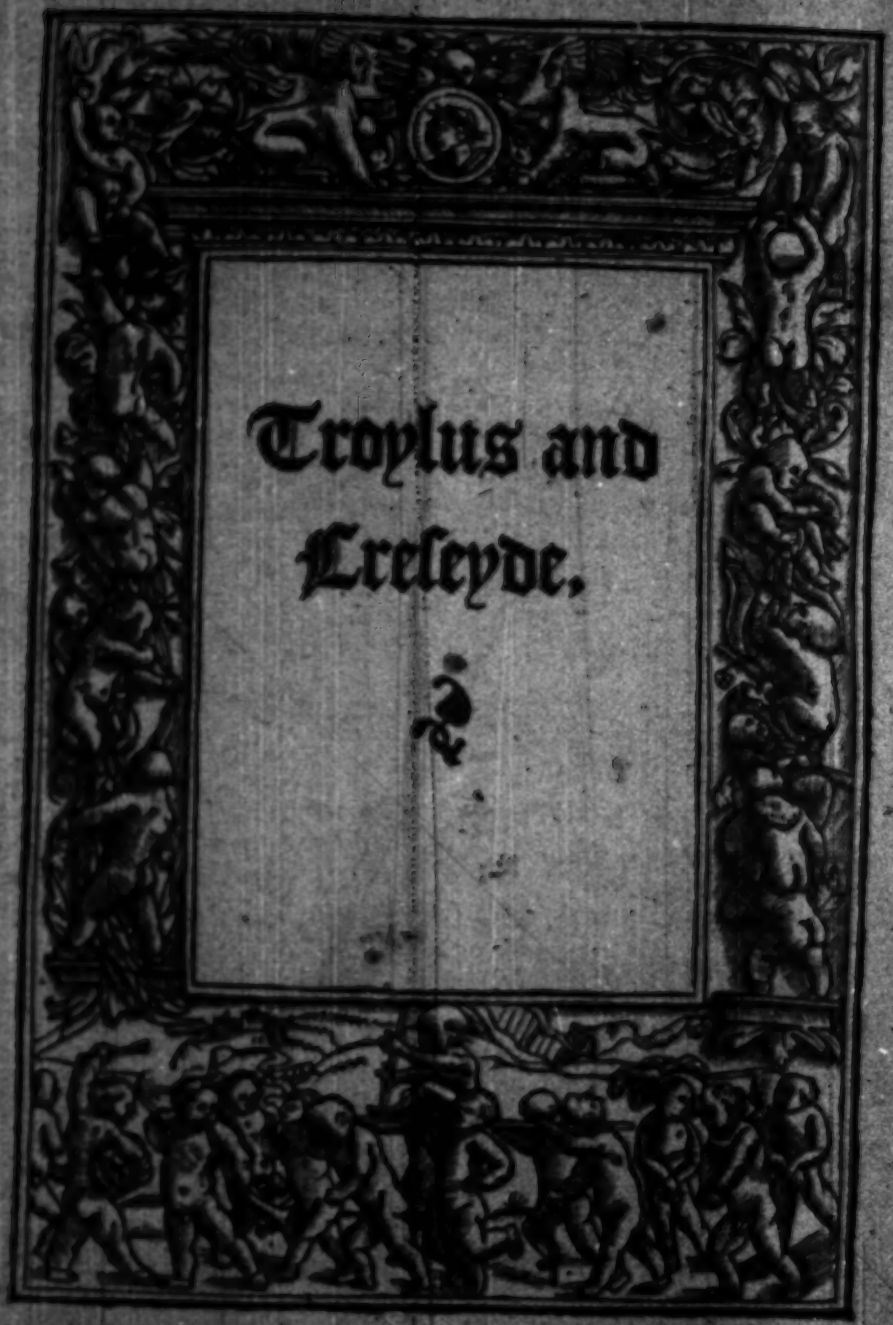
He

He preseth nat so ofte that ye
Ought of his comyng encombred be
There presen other folke on you
Ful ofter than he dothe nowe
And if his herte him strayned so
Unto the Rose for to go
ye shulde hym sene so ofte nede
That ye shalde take him with the drede
He coude his comynge nat forbeare
Though he him thrilled with a speare
It were nat than/ as it is nowe
But trusteth wel/ I swere it you
That it is cleue out of his thought
Sir/ certes he ne thynketh it nought
No more ne dothe Fayre Welcomyng
That sore abyeth al this thyng
And if they were of one assent
Ful soone were the Rose hent
The maugre yours wolde be
And sir/ of o thyng herkeneth me
Sith ye this may/ that loueth you
Han sayd suche harme/ and shame nowe
Wytteth wel/ if he gessed it
ye maye wel demen in your wyt
He nolde nothynge loue you so
Ne callen you his frende also
But nyght and daye he wol waite
The castel to distroye and take
If it were sothe/ as ye deuyse
Or some manne in some maner wyse
Might it warne him euerydele
Or by him selfe parceyue wele
For sithe he myght nat come and gone
As he was whylome wonte to done
He myght it soone wyte and se
But nowe al other wyse wote he
Than haue we sir al vtterly
Deserued helle/ and iolyly
The dethe of helle doutlesse
That thrallen folke so gryllesse.

Fasse Semblant so proueth this thyng
That he canne none answerynge
And seeth alwaye/ suche apparaunce
That nyght he set in repentaunce
And sayd him/ sir: It maye wel be
Semblant/ a good manne semeth ye
And Abstynence/ ful wyse ye sung
Of o talent you bothe I demne
What counsayle wol ye to me yeuen?
Right here anon thou shalt be shriuen
And say thy synne/ without more
Of this shalte thou repent sore
For I am preest/ and haue power
To shriue folke of most degree
That ben as wyde as worlde may be
Of al this worlde I haue the cure
And that had neuer yet person
Ne vycarie of no maner toun
And god wotte I haue of the
A thousande tymes more pyte
Than hath thy preest parochial
Though he thy frende be special
I haue auauntage in o wyse
That your prelates ben not so wyse
Ne halfe so lettred (as am I)
I am ysprayed boldely
In diuynite for to rede
And to confessen out of drede
If ye wol you nowe confesse
And leaue your synnes more and lesse
Without abode/ Uncle do me anon
And you shal haue absolucion.

¶ Finis.

¶ Here endeth the Romaunt of the Rose: And here foloweth the boke of Troylous and Creseyde.



Troylus and Creseyde.

The double sorowe of Troylus to tellen
That was kyng Priamꝰ/ soñ of Troy
In tourning/ how he fro auentures fellen
From wo to wele/ and after out of ioye
My purpose is/ er that I parte fro ye
Thou Thesiphone/ thou helpe me for tendite
These wofull versis/ that wepen as I write

To the I clepe/ thou goddesse of turment
Thou cruell furye/ sone wroth er ye repent
Helpe me that am the sorowful instrument
That helpeth louers/ as I can complayne
For wel sytte it/ the sothe for to sayne
A wofull wight to haue a dolly fere
And to a sorowful tale a sorye chere

For I that god of loues seruauntes serue
Al dare to loue/ for myne vnlyklynesse
Praye for spede/ al sholde I therfore sterue
So sterue ony I for his helpe in derkenesse
But natheles/ if this may done gladnesse
To any louer/ and his cause auayle
Haue he my thāke/ and myne be the trauayle

But ye louers that bathen in gladnesse
If any drope of pyte in you be
Remembreth you of passed sorynesse
If that ye haue felte/ and on the aduersyte
Of other folke/ and thynketh how we that ye
Han felte/ that loue destreyne you dysplease
Or ye haue wonne ony welth to great an ease

And prayeth for hem that ben in the case
Of Troylus/ as ye maye after here
That he hem bringe in ioye and in solace
And eke for me prayeth to god so dere
That I haue myght to ryme in some manere
Suche payne and wo/ as loue made folke endure
In Troylus louyng auenture

And bydde eke for hem that ben despeyred
In loue/ that neuer wyl recouered be
And eke for hem that falsely ben apeyred
Through wicked tonges/ be it he or she
Thus bydde I gode for hem and eke for me
So graūt hem soone out of this wo vs to ryse
That ben despeyred out of loues grace. For

And bydde eke for hem that ben at ese
That god hem graūt aye good perseueraūce
And sende hem grace her loues for to plese
That it to loue ne worshippe and pleasaūce
For so hope I my selfe best to auaūce
To praye for hem/ that loues seruauntes be
And write her wo/ and lyue in charite

And for to haue of hem compassyoun
As though I were her owne brother dere
Nowe herkeneth with a good entencioun
For now we wyl I go streight to my matere
In whiche ye maye the double sorowes here
Of Troylus/ in louynge of Creseyde
And how she forsoke him er that she deyde.

It is wel wist/ how ꝑ the grekes stronge
In armes wt a thousāde shippes wente
To Troye warde/ and the cyte longe
Desiegeden vp gode ten yeres er they stente
And in dyuerse wyse/ and one entente
The ranysshyng to wicke of quene Helayne
By Parys don/ they wroughten al her peyne

Nowe fel it so/ that in ꝑ toune there was
Dwellyng a lorde of great authoute
A great deuyne/ that cleped was Calcas
That in that science so cyperte was/ that he
Knewe wel/ that Troye sholde destroyed be
By answere of his god/ that sight thus
Day Phebus/ or Apollo Delphicus

So whan this Calcas knewe by calculyng
And eke by the answere of this god Apollo
That grekes sholde suche a people bryng
Thorow the whiche that Troye muste be forbo
He caste anone out of the toune to go
For wel he wyst by sorte/ that Troye sholde
Destroyed be/ ye wolde who so nolde

Wherfore to departen sodenly
Hath purpose ful/ thus for hym self he sayde
And to the goddes hath ful priuely
He shall anone/ and they in curtius wyse
Dyd hym honor/ worshippe and seruyce
In trust that he hath coniuryng hem to rede
In euery peryll/ whiche that was to drede

A.h. ii. Cryse

Great rumour roſe/whan it was firſt eſpied
In al the towne/ and openly was ſpoken
That Lacas traytour fledde was and alyed
To hem of Grece/ & caſt was to be wroken
On him/ that falſly hath his faith bioken
And ſayd: he and al his kynne atones
Were worthy to be brent bothe fel and bones.

Nowe had Lacas leſte in this myſchaunce
Vnwyſt of this falſe and wicked dede
A doughter/ whiche was in great penaunce
And of her lyfe ſhe was ful ſoore in drede
And wyſt neuer what beſt was to rede
And as a wydowe was ſhe/ and al alone
And vnyſt to whom ſhe might maſe her mone

Creſeyde was this ladyes name aright
As to my bonne/ in al Troyes cyte
Moſt fayreſt lady/ ſer paſſyng euery wight
So aungelyke ſhone her natyfe beaute
That no mortal thynge ſemed ſhe
And therwith was ſhe ſo parfyte a creature
As ſhe had be made in fromyng of nature

This lady/ that al dayr herde at eare
Her fathers ſhame falſhed/ and trayſoun
(Ful nygh out of her wyt for ſorowe & feare
In wydowes habite large of ſanyte browne)
Before Hector on knees ſhe fyl adowne
His mercy biadde/ her ſelfe excuſyng
With pytous voice/ and tenderly wepyng

Nowe was this Hector pytous of nature
And ſawe/ that ſhe was ſorouful bigone
And that ſhe was ſo fayre a creature
Of his goodneſſe he gladed her anone
And ſayd: latte your fathers trayſon gone
Forth with myſchaunce/ & ye your ſelfe in ioye
Dwelleth with vs/ while you lyſt in Troye

And al ỳ honour/ that may may do you haue
As ferforth as though your father dwelt here
Ye ſhul haue/ and your body ſhal mery ſauе
As for vs Troye ought ennuyes and fere
And ſhe him thanked with ful humble chere
And after wolde and it had ben his wyl
Toke her leaue/ went home and felde her fyl

And in her houſe ſhe abode with ſuche myrthe
As fyl her honour nede was to holde
And whyle ſhe was dwellyng in that cyte
She kept her eſtate/ & of penge and olde
Ful wel beloued/ and wel ment of her tolde
But whether that ſhe children had or none
I rede it not/ therfore I let it gone

¶ The thynges fellen as thefdays of werre
Betwyxen hem of Troye and grekes eſte
For ſom day boughten they of Troye it derre
And eſte the grekes founden nothyng ſoſte
The folke of Troye: & thus Fortune a loſte
And vnder eſte gan hem to aſſemen bothe
After her courſe/ aye whyle ỳ they were wrothe

But howe this tolwne cann to diſtruction
Ne falleth not to purpoſe me to tell
For it were a longe digreſſyon
Fro my matter/ and pou to longe to dwell
But the Troyan geſtes/ as they fell
In Dites/ or in Dares/ or in Dyte
Who ſo that can/ may reden hem as they write

But though ỳ grekes hem of Troye ſhette
And her cyte beſieged al aboute
Her olde vſages nolde they not lette
As to honouren her goddes ful deuoute
But alderaſt in honour out of doute
They had a myſyc hygbt Palladion
That was her truſt aboute euerychon

And ſo befyl/ whan cõmen was the tyme
Of Aprill/ whan clothed is the mede
With newe grene/ of luſty leef the pryme
And ſwete ſmellyng floures white and rede
In ſondrye wyſe ſhewed an Irede
The folke of Troye/ their obſeruaunces olde
Palladions feeſt went for to holde

Vnto the temple in al their beſt wyſe
Generally there went many a knyght
To herken of Palladions ſeruyce
And namely many a luſty lyghte
And many a lady freſſh/ and mayden bright
Ful wele arayed bothe wyſt and faſt
Bothe for the ſeaſon and the hye feaſt

Among

Among theſe other folkes was Creſeyde
In widowes habite blacke: but nathēles
Right as our firſt letter is no we an A
In beaute firſt: ſo ſtoode ſhe makeles
Her goodly loking gladed al the preſs
Ne neuer yet thyng to be preyſed derre
Ne ſhrder clouds blake ſo bright a ſterre

As was Creſeyde: they ſayden euerychone
That her behalfe in her blacke wede
And yet ſhe ſtoode ful lowe and ſtyl alone
Behynde other folke in ſpiel drede
And nyt the doore ſhamed drede
Symple of atyre: and debonayre of chere
Wyth ful aſſured lokyng and manere

This Troylus: as he was wont to gyde
His yonge knyghtes: ladde forth vp & downe
In thylke large temple on euery ſyde
Beholdyng ape the ladyes of the towne
Now here no we there: for no deuocioune
Had he to none: to reuers hym his eyſt
But gan to playſe and laſhe whom hym leſt

And in his walke ful faſt he gan to wayten
If knyght or squyer of his company
Gan ſai to ſyke: or lette his eyen bayten
On any woman: that he coude eſpye
He wolde ſmyle: and holde it a folye
And ſaye hym thus: O lorde ſir eſpeth ſoſte
For loue of the: whan thou mayeſt ful oft ſo

I haue herde the pardieux of youre ſhrywyng
Ycloured: and eke youre lewde obſeruaunce
And whyche a fauour folke haue in wowyng
Of loue: and in ſeruyng ſuche doutaunce
And whan youre prayer is leſt: two & penaunce
O ſely fooles: vnſonde and nyce be ye
Ther as nat one can wayte by another be

And wyth yͤ worde he gan caſt vp the hede
Aſkaunce ful: as that nat wel ypoſed
At whyche the god of Loue gan loken rede
Right for diſpite: and ſhope hym to be wroken
Sir yonge man: thus lowe was not ſpoken
Yet ſodaynly he hytte hym at the ful
And yet an hundred arowes gan he pul

O blynde worlde: o blynde entencioun
How ofte falleth al theffect contrayre
Of ſurquedrie and fonde preſumpcioun
For caught is proude: & caught is debonaire
Thus Troylus is clomben on the ſtayre
And ſpiel weneth: that he mote diſcenden
But al day fayleth that fooles wenden

As proude bayarde begynneth for to ſkyppe
Out of the waye: ſo pryketh hym his corne
Tyl he a ſaſſhe haue of the longe whyppe
Than thinketh he: though I praunce al beſoune
First in the traſe: ful fatte a newe pfhoune
Yet am I but an horſe: and horſes lawe
I muſt endure: and with my feeres drawe

Be fared it by this fiers and proude knyght
Though he a worthy kynges ſonne were
And wende nothyng had had ſuche myght
Againſt his wyl: that ſhulde his hert ſtere
Yet with a lokē his hert wode on fyre
That he yͤ now was moſt in pride aboue
Wode ſodaynly moſt ſubiecte vnto loue

For thy enſample taketh of this man
Ye wyſe: proude: and worthy folkes all
No ſkorne youre: whyche that ſo ſone can
The fredom of youre herte to hym thrall
For euer it was: and euer it be ſhal
That ſoue is he that alkyng may vnde
For no man may forbo the lawe of kynde

That this be ſothe: hath preued and dothe yet
For this (trowe I) ye knowe al & ſome
Ther reden nat that folke haue greater wyt
Than they: yͤ han ben moſt with loue ynome
And ſtrongeſt folke ben therwith ouercome
The wiſeſt and greateſt of degre
Thus was and is: and yet may ſhal it ſe

And truely ſhe that ſytte wel to be ſo
For alder wyſeſt han therwith ben pleſed
And they that han ben alkermoſte in wo
With loue: han ben conſoled moſt and eſed
And vſe it ſouth the ſmall herte apeſed
And worthy folke made worthyer of name
And vnaunſwerable to reden vyce and ſhame

Nowe sythe it may nat goodly be withstonde
And is a thyng so vertuous in vnde
Refuseth nought to loue/ for to ben bonde
Sythe as him seluen lyst he may you vnde
The perde is bet that bowen wol & wynde
Than that that brest/ and therfore I you rede
Nowe folowe th him/ that so wel can you lede

But for to tellen forthe in speciall
As of this kynges sonne/ of whiche I tolde
And leuen other thyng collaterall
Of him thynke I/ my tale forthe to holde
Bothe of his ioye/ and of his cares colde
And his werke/ as touchyng this matere
For I it gan/ I wol therto refere

Within the tẽple he went him forthe playeng
This Troylus/ of euery wight aboute
Ou this lady/ and nowe on that lokyng
Where so she were of towne/ or of without
And vpon case bifel/ that through a route
His eye perced/ and so depe it went
Tyl on Creseyde it smote/ and there it stent

And sodaynly for wonder wext astoned
And gan her bet vbeholde in thrifty wyse
O Venus god thought he/ wher hast thou wõned
That arte so fayre/ and goodly to deuyse
Ther with his herte gan to sprede and tyse
And softe syghed/ lest men might him here
And caught ayen his first playeng chere

She nas nat with the most of her stature
But al her lymmes so wel answerying
Weren to womanhode/ that creature
Was neuer lasse mannyssh in semyng
And eke the pure wyse of her meanyng
Shewed wel/ that men might in her gesse
Honour/ estate/ and womanly noblesse

Tho Troylus/ right wonder wel with all
Gan for to lyke her meanyng and her chere
Which sondele deignous was/ for she set fall
Her loke alyte a syde/ in suche maniere
Ascaunces/ what may I not stonden here
And after that/ her lokyng gan she lyghte
That neuer thought him seme so good a lyghte

And of her loke in him there gan to quiken
So great desyre/ and furthe affection
That in his herte botmen gan to sticken
Of her his shape/ and depe impression
And though he erste had poure vp and down
Thay was he glad his homes in to shrinke
Vnnethes wyste he how to loke or wynke

Lo/ she that lete him seluen so coumyng
And scorned hem that loues paynes dure
Was ful bifore that loue had his dwellyng
Within the subtyll stremes of her eyen
That sodaynly him thought he felte dyen
Right with her loke/ the spyrite in his herte
Blessed be loue/ that thus can folke conuerte

She this in blacke/ lyklyng to Troylus
Ouer al thyng he stode for to beholde
But his desyre/ ne wherfore he stode thus
He nyste/ ner cheere made/ ne worde tolde
But fro a ferre/ his manere for to holde
On other thyng sometyme his loke he caste
And eft on her/ whyle that the seruyce laste

And after this/ nat fullyche al a whaped
Out of the temple al eselyche he wente
Repentyng him that he had euer iaped
Of loues folde/ lest fully the desente
Of scorne fyl on him selfe/ but what he mente
Lest it were wyste on any maner syde
His wo he gan dissymulen and hyde

Whan he was fro thir temple thus departed
He streyght anon vnto his palays turneth
Right with her loke/ through shotten & darted
Al fayneth he in lust that he sorourneth
And al his cheere & speche also he bourneth
And ape of loues seruauntes euery whyt
Him selfe to wite/ at hem he gan to smyle

And sayd lorde/ so they serue al in lust
Ye louers/ for the comyngest of you
That serueth most ententifliche and best
Him tyte as often harme therof as pitie
Your hyre is quyt ayen/ ye god wot how
Nat wele for wele/ but scorne for good seruise
In faythe your ordris ruled in good wyse

In

In no certayne lady your obseruaunce
But it a sely some poynted be
Yet nothyng asketh so great attendaunce
As doth your laye/ and that know we al ye
But that is nat the worste/ as mote I the
But telde I you the worste poynt/ I knet
Al sayd I sothe/ ye wolden at me grutt

But taste this/ that ye louers ofte eschewe
Dyuels dout of good entencion
Ful ofte thy lady wol it myssse construwe
And demt it harme in her opynion
And yet if she for other encheson
Be wroth/thā shalt thou haue a grete anoye
Lorde/ wel is him that may ben of your ioye

But for al this/ whan that he fresh hir tyme
He held his pees/ non other bote him gayned
For loue began his fetheres so to tyme
That wel vnneth vnto his folke he fayned
That other besy nedes him distrayned
So wo was him/that what to done he wyst
But bad his folke to go where as hem lyst

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He down on his beddes sete him sette
And first he gan to sike/ and efte to grone
And thought aye on her so wythouten lette
That as he satte and woke/his spyrite mette
That he her sawgh/ and temple/ z al the wyse
Right of her loke/and gan it newe auyse

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his mynde
In whiche he sawgh al holy her sygure
And that he wel coude in his herte fynde
It was to him a right good auenture
To loue suche one/ and if he dyd his cure
To serue her/ yet myght he fal in grace
Ot els/ for one of her seruauntes place

Imaginyng/ that trauayle nor grutte
Ne myght/ for so good hope gan he fynde
Ne she/ ne him for his desyre no shame
Ne wist it wyst/ but in pure and sp game
Of al seruyce/ wel more than before me
Thus ymagined he/ in his gyrnyng
Ful sharply set of his loo clayming

Thus tolde he purpose lones craftes to fynde
And thought he wolde worken priuely
First to hyde his desyre in the wo
From euery wyghte yborne/ al outterly
But he myght aught recouered ben therby
Remembrynge him/that loue to wynne ywis me
Yelte bytter fruite/though swete sede be sowe

And ouer al this/ ful wisely gan he thynke
What for to speke/and what to holden inne
And what to asten/her to loue he sought
And on a songe anonright to begynne
And gan loude on his sorowe for to wynne
For with good hope/he gan ful sone assente
Lyrsepde for to loue/and nought repente

And of his songe not onely his sentence
As wolde myn auctour called Lollius
But playnly saue our tonges difference
I dare wel say/in al that Troylus
Sayd in his songe/ so euery worde right thus
As I shal sayne/and who so lyste it here
To nepe this verse/he may it fynde here.

¶ The song of Troylus.

¶ If no loue is/o god what fele I so
And if loue is/what thyng and whiche is he
If loue be good/ from whence cometh my wo
If it be wycke/a wonder thynketh me
Whan euery turment and aduersyte
That cometh of him/ may to me sauory thinke
For aye thurste I the more that ich it drinke

And if that at myn owne lust I brenne
From whēce cometh my wayling z my playnte
If harme agree me/ wherto playn I thenne
I not/ ne why/ vnwery that I seynte
O quicke deth/ o swete harme so queynte
How may of the in me/ be suche quantyte
But if that I consente that it so be

And if that I consente/I wrongfully
Complayne yuel/thus posed to and fro
Al stereliche within a bote am I
Amydde the see/ al wyndes two
That in contrarye stonden euer mo
Alas/ what is this wonder maladye?
For heate of colde/ for colde of heate I dye

And

And to the god of loue thus sayd he
With pytous voyce/ O lorde now is
My spyrite/ whiche that ought youre be
You thonke I lorde/ þ han me brought to this
But whether goddesse or woman pure
She be/ I not whythe/ that ye do me serue
But as her man I wol aye lyue and sterue.

ye stonden in her eyen mightyly
As in a place to your vertue digne
Wherfore lorde/ if my seruyce or I
May lyken you/ so yeth to me benigne
For myn estate royal here I resigne
In to her honde/ and with ful humble chere
Become her man/ as to my lady dere

In him ne deigned sparen blood royall
The fyre of loue/ wherfro god me blesse
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue/ or his excellent prowesse
But helde him as his thrall lowe in distresse
And prende him so in sondrie wyse aye newe
That sixty tymes a day he lost his hewe

So mochel day fro day his owne thought
For lustie to her/ gan quicken and encrease
That euerych other charge he set at nought
For thy ful ofte/ his hotte fyre to cease
To serue her goodly lowe he gan to preasse
For therby to ben eased wel he wende
And aye the nere he was/ the more he brende

For aye the nere the fyre the hotter is
This (trowe I) kno weth al this compayne
But were he ferre or nere/ I dare say this
By nyght or day/ for wisdom or folye
His herte/ whiche that is his bestes eye
Was aye on her/ that fayrer was to sene
Than euer was Helayne/ or Polyxene.

Ebe of the day there passed not an houre
That to him selfe a thousande tyme he seyde
God goodly/ to whom I serue and laboure
As I best can/ now wolde god Cupeyde
ye wolden ony me rewe/ er that I deyde
My dere herte alas/ myn herte and hewe
And lyfe is lefe/ but ye wol ony me rewe

Al other dredes weren from him fledde
Both of thassiege/ and his saluacion
Ne in despite non other lowes bredde
But arguments to his conclusion
That she on him wolde han compassion
And he to ben her man/ whyle he may dure
Lo here his lyfe/ and from him dethe his cure

The sharpe shoures felt of armes pure
That Hector or his other brethern dyden
Ne made him ouly therfore ones mene
And yet was he/ where so men went or ryden
Foulde one the beste/ and lengest tyme abyden
There peryll was/ and dyd ek surhe trauayle
In armes/ that to thynke it was meruayle

But for none hate he to the grekes had
Ne also for the rescous of the town
Ne made him thus in armes for to mad
But onely for/ for thus conclusioun
To lyken her the bette for his renoun
Fro day to day in armes so he spedde
That the Grekes ag the dethe him dredde

And fro this forth tho reste him fone his slepe
And made his meate his foe/ þ ete his sorowe
Gan multiplye/ that who so toke kepe
In shewed in his hewe bothe eue and morowe
Therfore a tytle he gan him for to borowe
Of other sickenesse/ lest men of him wende
That the hotte fyre of loue him brende

And sayd he had a feuer/ and fared amys
But were it certayne I can nat say
If that the lady vnderstode not this
Or fayned her she nyste/ one of the tway
But wel rede I/ that by no maner way
Ne semed it/ that she ay him rought
Or of his payne/ what so euer he thought

But than felte this Troylus suche wo
That he was wel nigh wode/ for aye his dede
Was this/ that she somewhyght loued so
That neuer of him she wolde han ruth or mede
For whiche him thought he felte his herte bleede
Ne of his wo ne durste he nought beginne
To tellen her/ for al this worlde to winne

But

But whan he had a ſpace from hir gone
Thus to him ſelfe ful ofte he gan to playne
He ſayde/ o foole nowe artte thou in the traine
That whylom tapedeſt at loues payne
Nowe art ꝑ hent/nowe gnaw thyn owne chayne
Thou were aye woned eche louer repreheude,
Of thing fro whiche thou canſt ꝑ not defende

What wol nowe euery louer ſayne of the
If this be wyſt: but euer in thyn abſence
Laughen in ſcorne/and ſayne to there goth he
That is the man of great ſapyence
That helde vs louers leſte in reuerence
Nowe thanked be god/he may goy on ꝑ daūce
Of hem that loue lyſte frely ananuce

But o thou woful Troylus/ god wolde
Sythe thou muſt louen/thorugh thy deſtyne
That thou beſet were on ſuche one/ ꝑ ſholde
Knowe al thy wo/al lacked her pyte
But alſo colde hy loue to warden the
Thy lady is/as froſte in wynter moone
And thou fordo/as ſnowe in fyre is ſoone

God wolde I were aryued in the porte
Of dethe/to whiche my ſorowe wol me lede
Ah ſorde / to me it were a great comforte
Than were I quyt of languyſſyng in drede
For be my hed ſorowe ꝓfo we in drede
I ſhal be raped ten a thouſande tyme
More than ꝑ foole/ of whoſe ſolye may tyme

But nowe helpe god / and ye ſwete/for whom
I playne/ycaught ye neuer wyght ſo faſte
O mercy dere herte/and helpe me from
The dethe/for I/whyle that my lyfe may laſte
More than my ſelfe wol loue you to my laſte
And with ſome frendly loke gladeth me ſwete
Thogh neuer more thyng ye me byhete

¶ Theſe wordes/and ful many an other mo
He ſpake/and called euer hir name
Her name/for to tellen hir his wo
Tyſyphe that he in ſalle terrie dureſte
Al was for nought/ ſhe herde not his playnte
And whan that he bethought on that ſolye
A thouſande folde his wo gan multiplye

Betwayſyng in his chambre thus alone
A frende of his/ that called was Pandare
Came onys in vnwarre/and herde hym grone
And ſawe hes frende in ſuche diſtreſſe & care
Alas (quod he) who cauſeth al this fare?
O mercy god/what vnhap may this mene?
Han nowe thus ſone greſes made you lene?

Or haſte thou ſome remorſe of conſcience?
And arte nowe falle in ſome deuocioun
And wayleſt for thy ſynne and thyn offence
And haſt for ferde caught a contricioun
God ſaue hem/ that beſieged han our toun
That ſo can ſay our ſoyte on preſſe
And bringe our luſty folke to holynesſe

Theſe wordes ſayd he for the nones all
That wyth ſuch thig he myght him angry maken
And with his anger don his ſorowe fal
As for a tyme/and his corage awaken
But wel wyſte he/as ferre as longes ſpaken
There nas a man of greter hardyneſſe
Than he/ne more deſyred worthyneſſe

¶ What cas (qꝺ Troylus) or what auenture
Hath gyded the to ſeue me languyſſyng
That am refuſe of euery creature?
But for the loue of god/at my preyeng
Go hence away/for certes my deyeng
Wol the diſeſe/and I mote nedes dey
Therfore go way/there nys no more to ſey

But if thou wene I be thus ſyke for drede
It is nat ſo/and therfore ſtorne nought
There is an other thyng I take of hede
Wel more thā aught ꝑ greſes han yet wrought
Which cauſeth of my deth for ſorowe thought
But thogh that I nowe tell it the nelle
Be thou not wrothe/I hyde it for the beſte

This Pādare/ꝑ nygh made for wo a traunce
Ful often ſayd alas/what may this be
Nowe frende (qꝺ he) if euer ſaue or trouthe
Hath ben er this betwixen the and me
Ne do thou neuer ſuche a crueltie
To hyden fro thy frende ſo great a care
Wiſte thou not wel that I am Pandare?

I wol

I wol parten with the al thy payne
If it ſo be I do the no comforte
As it is frendes right/ſothe for to ſayne
To enterparten wo/as glad diſporte
I haue and ſhal/for trewe or falſe reporte
In wronge and right ꝑoued the al my lyue
Hyde nat thy wo fro me/but tel it blyue

Than gan this ſorouful Troylus to ſyke
And ſaid hym thus / God leue it be my beſt
To telleu the/for ſythe it may the lyke
Yet wol I tel it/though my herte breſt
And wel wote I/ thou mayſte do me no reſt
But ſeſte thou deme I truſte nat to the
Nowe herke frende/for thus it ſtant with me

Loue/ ayenſt the whiche who ſo defendeth
Hym ſelueu moſte/him alder leſt auayleth
With diſpeyte ſo ſorouſully me offendeth
That ſtreight vnto the dethe myn hert ſayleth
Therto deſpite/ſo brennyngly me aſſayleth
That to beu ſlayne it were a greater iope
To me/than kyng of Grece be and of Trope

Suſpyſeth this/my ful frende Pandare
That I haue ſaid/for nowe woſt thou my wo
And for the loue of god my colde care
So hyde it wel/I tolde it neuer to mo
For hatmes mighten folowen mo than two
If it were wyſt/but be thou in gladneſſe
And let me ſterue vnknowe of my diſtreſſe

Howe haſt thou thus vnkyndly a longe
Hyd this fro me/ thou ſole ? (qõ Pandarus)
Paraduenture thou mayſt after ſuch one lõge
That myn auyſe anoy may helpen be
This were a wonder thing (qõ Troylus)
Thou couldeſt neuer in loue thy ſelfen wyſſe
Howe dyuel mayſt thou bilgen me to blyſſe ?

Cye Troylus/nowe herke (quod Pandare)
Though I be nyce/it happeth often ſo
That one that ayes dothe ful yuell fare
By good counſaile can bepe his frende therfro
I haue my ſelfe ſeyne a blynde man go
There as he fell/that coude ſothen wyde
A foole may eke a wyſe man often gyde

A whetſtone is no kerueng inſtrument
Dut yet it maketh ſharpe kerueng tolis
And ther thou woſt ꝑ I haue aught miſmet
Eſchue thou ꝑ/for ſuche thing to ſchafe is
Thus often wyſe men ben ware by fooliſ
If thou ſo do/thy wyt is wel bywared
By his contrarye is euery thyng declared

For how myght euer ſwetneſſe haue be knowe
To hym / that neuer taſted bytternesſe ?
Ne no man wote what gladneſſe is I trowe
That neuer was in ſorowe/or ſome diſtreſſe
Eke white by blacke/by ſhame eke worſchipe
Eche ſet by other/more for other ſemeth
As men may ſene/and ſo the wyſe it demeth

Sythe thus of two contrarye is o lore
I that haue myn loue ſo ofte aſſayed
Greuaunces/ ought conneu wel the more
Counſayleu the/of that thou arte diſmayed
And eke the ne ought nat ben yuel apayed
Though I deſpite with the for to bere
Thyn heuy charge/it ſhal the laſſe dere

I wote wel that it fared thus by me
As to thy brother Paryſ/an hierdeſſe
Whiche that cleped was Denone
Wrote myn a complaynte of her heuyneſſe
Ye ſawe the letter that ſhe wrote/ I geſſe
Nay neuer yet ilyke (quod Troylus)
Nowe (qõ Pandare) herkeneth it was thus

Phebus/that firſt fonde arte of medicyne
(Quod ſhe) and conde in euery lymbes cure
Remedy and rede/ by herbes he knewe fyne
yet to him ſelfe his conneyng was ful bare
For loue had hym ſo bounden in a ſnare
Al for the dougbter of the kyng Admete
That al his craft ne conde his ſorowe bete

Right ſo fare I/vnhappy for me
I loue one beſt/and that me ſmerteth ſore
And yet paraduenture can I reden the
And nat my ſelfe/repreue me no more
I haue no cauſe I wot wel for to ſoore
As dothe an hauke/that lyſteth fal to play
Dut to thy helpe/yet ſomwhat can I ſay

And of a thyng/ right ſyker mayſt thou be
That certayne/ for to dyen in the payne
That I ſhal neuer mo diſcouer the
Ne by my trouthe/ I hope not reſtreyne
The fro thy loue/ al though it were Heleyne
That is thy brothers wyfe/ if yche it wyſte
Be what ſhe be/ and loue her as the lyſt

Therfore/ as frendfully yche in me aſſure
And tel me platte/ what is thyn entencion
And fynall cauſe of wo/ that ye endure
For doutleſs nothyng/ myn entencion
Was nat to you of repreuyng vpon
To ſpeke as me lyſt/ for no wight may byreue
A man to loue/ tyl that hym lyſt to leue

And wete it wel/ that bothe two ben vyces
Oppreſſyon al/ or elles al leue
But wel I wot/ the meane of it no vyce is
As for to truſten ſome wight is a preue
Of trouthe/ and for thy wolde I fayne remeue
Thy wronge conceyte/ & do the ſom wight truſt
Thy wo to tell/ and tell me al the luſt

The wyſe ſeyth/ wo hym that is alone
For and he fall/ he hath none helpe to ryſe
And ſythe thou haſte a felowe/ tell thy mone
For thus nys nought certayne the next wyſe
To wynnen loue/ as techen vs the wyſe
To wale we and wepe/ as Niobe the queene
Whoſe teares yet in marble ben yſeene

Let be thy wepyng/ and thy derkneſſe
And let vs ſyſſen wo/ with other ſpeche
So may thy woful tyme ſome leſſe
Deſyre nought in wo/ thy wo to eſche
As doy theſe fooles/ that her ſorowes eche
With ſorowe/ whan they han miſaduenture
And lyſten nought to techen other cure

Thus ſayne to hym ſche in conſolacion
To haue another felawe in his payne
That ought wel ben our opinyon
For bothe thou and I of loue playne
So ful of ſorowe am I/ ſothe to ſayne
That certainly/ no more harde grace
May ſyt on me/ for why there is no ſpace

If god wil/ than ait nought agaſt of me
Leſte I wolde of thy lady the begyle
Thou woſt thy ſelfe/ whom that I ſerue parde
As I beſt can/ gon ſythen longe whyle
And ſythen thou woſt/ I do it for no wyle
And ſythe I am he/ that thou truſteth moſte
Tel me ſom what/ ſens al my wo thou woſte.

Yet Troylus/ for al this no worde ſayde
But longe he lay ſtyll/ as he dred were
And after this/ with ſyghyng he abrayde
And to Pandarus voyer he lente his eere
And vp his eyen caſte he/ and than in feere
Was Pandarus/ leſte that in frenſeye
He ſhulde fall/ or elſe ſome deye

And ſayd a wake/ ful wonderlyche & ſharpe
What ſlombreſt thou/ as in a lytargye?
Or arte thou lyke an aſſe to the harpe
That herith ſoun/ what men ỹ ſtringes plyte
But in his mynde/ of that no melodye
Wayt ſmyte hym to gladen/ for that he
So dull is/ in his beſtyalite

And with this/ Pandare of his wordes ſtent
But Troylus to hym no thyng anſwerde
For why/ to tel was nought his entent
Neuer to no man/ for whom that he ſo ferde
For it is ſayd/ men maken ofte a perde
With whiche the maiſter is hym ſelfe ybeten
In ſondrie maner/ as theſe wyſe treten

And namelyche in his counſayle tellyng
That toucheth loue/ that ought ben ſecre
For of hym ſelfe it wol ynough out ſpring
But if that it the bet gouerned be
Eke ſomtyme it is craſte to feme ſlee
For thyng/ whiche in effecte men hunten faſte
Al this gan Troylus in his herte caſte

But nathelleſſe/ whan he had herde hym crye
A wake he gan/ and ſyke wonder ſore
And ſayd frende/ though that I ſtyll lye
I nam nat deafe/ na we peace & crye no more
For I haue herde thy wordes/ and thy ſore
But ſuffre me my fortune to bewayten
For thy prouerbes may nought me auayle

For

Nor other cure canſt thou none for me
Ellis I nyl not ben cured/ I wol dey
What knowe I of the quene Niobe:
Let be thyn olde enſamples/ I the prey
No frende (qd Pandarus) therfore I ſey
Suche is delyte of fooles to bewepe
Her wo/but ſelden boote they hir bepe

Nowe knowe I that reſon in the ſayeth
But tel me/if I wyſte what ſhe were
For whom that the al miſauenture ayleth
Durſte thou that I tolde it in her eere
Thy wo/ſith thou darſt not thy ſelfe for fere
And her beſought/on the to han ſome routhe
Why nay (qd he) by god and by my trouthe

What/not as beſily (quod Pandarus)
As though myn owne lyfe lay in this nede
Why no parde ſir (quod this Troylus)
And why: for that thou ſhuldeſt neuer ſpede
Woſte thou that wel: ye that is out of drede
(Quod Troylus) for al that euer ye conne
She wol to no ſuche wrecche as I be wonne

(Quod Pandarus) alas what may this be
That thou diſpayred arte/thus cauſeleſſe
What/ſyneth nat thy lady/benedicite
How woſt thou ſo/ that thou arte graceleſſe
Suche yuel is not alwaye boteleſſe
Why put nat impoſſible thus thy cure
Bythe thyng to come is oft in auenture

I graunt wel that thou endureſt wo
As ſharpe as dothe he Tiſiphus in hell
Whoſe ſtomake foules tyren euer mo
That hyghten Vultures/ as bokes tell
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In ſo vnſelyful an opinyon
That of thy wo nys no curacion

But ones nyll thou/for thy cowarde herte
And for thyn ire/and folyſſhe wylfulneſſe
For wantruſt tellen of thy ſorowes ſmerte
Ne to thyn owne helpe/do beſyneſſe
As mothe as ſpeke a worde/ye more or leſſe
But ſyeſt as he that of lyfe nothyng retche
What woman coude loue ſuche a wrecche

What may ſhe demen other of thy dethe
If thou thus dye/and ſhe nat why it is
But that for feare/ is ſoldein vp thy breſte
For grekes han beſieged Troye thus
Lorde which a thefe ſhalt yᵗ haue thā of this
Thus wol ſhe ſayne/ & al the toune atones
The wrecches deed/ the dyuel haue his bones

Thou mayſt alone here wepe/ crye/ & ſhrike
But loue a woman that ſhe wote it nought
And ſhe wol quite it that thou ſhalte nat ſike
Vnknowe vnſyſt/ and loſt that is vnſought
What many a man hath loue ful dere abought
Twenty wynter that hir lady ne wyſte
That neuer yet his ladys mouth he kyſte

What/ ſhuld he therfore fallen in diſpeyre:
Or be recreaunt for his owne tene
Or ſlayne hym ſelfe/ al be his lady fayre
Nay nay: but euer in one be freſſh & grene
To ſerue and loue/ his dere hertes quene
And thynke it is a guerdone her to ſerue
A thouſande parte more/ than he can deſerue

And of that worde toke hede Troylus
And thought anone/ what ſothe he was in
And how he that ſothe hym ſayde Pandarus
That for to ſlen hym ſelfe/ought he nat wyn
But bothe done vnmanhode and a ſyn
And of his dethe his lady nought to wyte
For of his wo/god wote ſhe knewe ful lyte

And with ỳ thought/ he gan ful ſore ſyke
And ſaid/ Alas: what is me beſt to do
To whom Pandare ſayd/ if the lyke
The beſt is/ that thou tel me thy wo
And haue my trouth/ but if thou fynde it ſo
I be thy bote/or it be ful longe
To perce do me drawe/ and ſythen hongē

Ye/ ſo ſayſt thou (qd Troylus) alas:
But god wote it is naught the rather ſo
Ful harde it were to helpen in this caſe
For wel fynde I/ that fortune is my foe
Ne al the men that ryde conne or go
Way of her cruel wheles the harme withſtonde
For as her lyſt/ ſhe playeth with fre & bonde

Quod

(qꝺ Pandarus) than blameſt thou fortune
For thou arte wroth/ ye no wꝛ at erſt I ſe
Wolt thou wat wel that fortune is commune
To euery maner wight/ wy ſome begynne
And yet thou haſt this comforte/ ſo prouꝺe
That as her ioyes moſtly ourrygone
So mote her ſoꝛo wes paſſen eueriſhone

For if her wheele ſtynt/ any thyng to tourne
Than aſſeth ſhe fortune aroune to be
Now fall her wheele by no way may ſojourne
What woſte thou if her mutabylite
Right as thy ſelues haſt wol don by the
Or that ſhe be wroght ſeure ſo thyn helpyng
Paraventure thou haſte cauſe for to ſyngē

And therfoꝛe woſte thou what/ I the beſeche
Let bothy wo/ and turnyng to the grounde
For who ſo hyſt haue healpyng of his leche
Is fayn bytymes firſt hī wone his woūde
To Lethenus in hell aye be I bounde
Were it for my ſuſter al thy ſoꝛowe
By my wyſ ſhe ſhulde be thyn to morowe

Loke vp I ſay/ and tel me what ſhe is
Anon/ that I may gon aboute thy nede
Now we pese her aught/ for my loue tel me this
Than wolde I hope rather for to ſpede
Tho gan the beyne of Troylus to blede
For ſhe was hyt/ and wope al redꝺ for ſhame
A ha (qꝺ Pandare) here begynneth game

And with that worde/ he gan him for to ſhake
And ſayd thefe/ thou ſhalte her name tell
But tho gan ſaſy Troylus for to quake
As thought mey ſhulde him had him in to hell
And ſayd alſo/ of al my wo the well
Than is my ſwete foe called Creſeyde
And wel nigh with ꝓ worde for frare ſe deyde

And whan ꝓ Pãdare herde her name neuey
Lorde ſe was glad/ and ſayd/ frende ſo derꝺ
Now fare a right/ for Ioues name my heuey
Loue hath beſet the wel/ be of good cheꝛe
For of good name/ & wyſdom/ and manere
She hath ynough/ and elꝺe of gentyleſſe
If ſhe be ſayꝛe/ than woſte thy ſelfe I geſſe

Ne neuer ſey a mare bounteous
Of her eſtate/ ne a gladder: ne of ſpeche
A frendlyer/ ne more gracious
For to do wel/ ne laſſe had nede to teche
What for to don/ and al this bet to eſche
In honour/ trow ſeure as ſhe may ſtirche
A lyuyng herꝺ fanneth by here a wyrche

And for thy loſe of good comforte thou be
For certaunly the firſt poynt is this
Of noble corage/ and wiſe ordayne the
A man to haue peace with him ſelfe ywis
So oughteſt thou/ for nought but good it is
To louen wel/ and in a worthy place
The ought nat dispe it happe/ but grace

And alſo thynke/ and therwith glade the
That ſuche thy lady vertuous is al
So ſolo wath it/ that there is ſome pyte
Amonges al theſe other in generał
And for they ſe that thou in ſpecial
Require nought/ that is apeyn her name
For vertue ſtretcheth nat him ſelfe to ſhame

But wel is me/ that euer I was borne
That thou beſet arte in ſo good a place
For by my trouth I lowe I durſt haue ſworne
The ſhulde neuer haue tydde ſo faire a grace
And woſt ꝙ̄ why? for ꝙ̄ were wōt to chace
Alone in ſchune/ and for diſpute hem cal
Dayne Idiote/ lorde of theſe ſoles al

How often haſt thou made thy nyce iapes
And ſaid/ that louers ſeruauntes euerichone
Of nycete/ hem very goddes apes
And ſome wolde mouch her meate alone
Lyggynge a bedde/ & make hem for to grone
And ſome thou ſaydeſt had a blanche feuere
And ꝓꝓydeſt god they ſhulde neuer beuere

And ſome of hem/ to be on hem for the colde
Wore than ynough/ ſo ſaydeſt thou ful ofte
And ſome han ſayned ofte tyme and tolde
How that they wakey/ whan they ſlepe ſofte
And thus they wolde ſome ſet hem ſelf a loſte
And natheleſſe were vnder at the laſt
Thus ſaydeſt thou/ and lapedeſt ful faſt

Yet sadyest thou/ that for the more parte
These louers wolde speke in general
And thoughten it was a sper arte
For sayeng for to assayen ouertal
Nowe maye I iape of the/ if that I shal
But natheles/ though that I shulde dey
Thou arte none of tho/ I dare wel sey

Nowe bete thy brest/ and say to god of Loue
Thy grace sorde/ for nowe I me repent
Yf I myspake/ for nowe my selfe I loue
Thus saye with al thyne hert/ in good entent
(Quod Troylus) ah lorde/ I me consent
And pray to the/ my rapes thou forgeue
And I shal neuer more whyle I lyue

Thou sayst wel (qd Pãdare) I nowe I hope
That thou the goddes wrath hast al apesed
And sythe thou haste wepten many a drope
And said such thig/ wherwith thy god is plesed
Nowe wolde neuer god/ but thou were eased
And thynke wel she/ of whom tryst al thy wo
Here after may thy comforte bey also

For thylke grõde/ ỹ beareth the weden wicke
Beareth eke these holsome herbes/ as ful ofte
Neyt the foule nettle/ rough and thicke
The rose weyeth/ soote/ smoth/ and softe
And neyt the valey is the hyll a loste
And neyt the derke nyght the glade morowe
And also rope is neyt the fyne of sorowe

Nowe loke that attempre be thy budel
And for the beste aye suffre to the tyde
Or els al our labour is on ydel
He hasteth wel/ that wysely can abyde
Be dyligent and trewe/ and aye wel hyde
Be lusty/ free/ perseuer in thy seruyse
And al is wel/ if thou werke in this wyse

But he that departed is in euery place
Is no where hole/ as writen clerkes wyse
What wonder is/ if suche one haue no grace
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some seruyse
As plante a tree or herbe/ in sondrie wyse
And on the morowe pull it vp as blyue
No wonder is/ though it may neuer thryue

And sythe that god of loue hath the beset wed
In place degne vnto thy worthynesse
Stonde fast/ for to good porte hast ỹ rowed
And of thy selfe/ for any hauynesse
Hope alway wel/ for but if slouthynesse
Or ouerhaste our bothe labour shende
I hope of this to maken a good ende

And wost thou why/ I am the lasse afered
Of this mater/ with my nece toute
For this haue I herde saye of wyse sered
Was neuer man or woman yet begyte
That was vnapte to suffre somes hete
Celestyal/ or els loue of hymde
For thy some grace I hope in her to fynde

And for to speke of her in special
Her beaute to bethynken/ and her youthe
It syt her nought/ to ben celestyal
As yet/ though that her lyst bothe and louthe
And trewly it syt her wel right nouthe
A worthy vnyght to louen and cherysse
And but she do/ I holde it for a vyce

Wherfore I am/ and wol ben aye redy
To payne me to do you this seruyce
For bothe you to please/ this hoope I
Here after/ for ye ben bothe wyse
And conne it counsayle kepe in suche a wyse
That no man shal the wyser of it be
And so we maye ben gladed al thre

And by my trouth I haue right nowe of the
A good conceit/ in my wytte as I gesse
And what it is/ I wol nowe that thou se
I thynke that sithe Loue of his goodnesse
Hath the conuerted out of wickednesse
That thou shalte ben the best post I trowe
Of al his lay/ and most his foes greue

Ensample why/ se nowe these great clerkes
That erren aldermost aye a lawe
And ben conuerted from her wicked werkes
Thrugh grace of god/ ỹ best ben to drawe
Than arne they soone ỹ han most god in awe
And strengest saythed ben I vnderstonde
And conne an errour aldrebest withstonde

Than

Whan Troylus had herde Pandare assented
To bere his helpe/in louyng of Creseyde
Went of his way/as he that sayde wolde neuer lette
But hotter wente his loue/and than he sayde
With sobre chere/as though his herte playde
Now blisful Venus helpe/er that I sterue
Of the Pandare/I nor we some thanke deserue

But dere frende/how we shal my wo be lesse
Ye/thus he sayde/and good cure tel me this
How wyst thou sayest of me and my distresse
Lest sha be wrothe/thou dredest I moste pwa
Or wel not heren of how we it is
If this dede I/and cure for the manere
Of the her cure/she wyl no suche thyng here

(Quod Pandarus) thou hastest a ful gret pace
Lest the house may fall out of the moone
Why soude I haue of the the nyer pace
Why/entermete of that thou hast to doone
For goddes loue/I bydde the aboone
Do let me alone/and it shal be thy beste
Why frende (quod he) thou done right as the leste

But herke Pandare o worde/for I nolde
That thou in me wendest so great folye
That to my lady I desyren shulde
That toucheth harme/or any vylanye
For dredelesse me were leuer dye
Than she of me aught elis vnderstood
But that/that might sowen in to good

Tho sought this Pandarus/and anon answerde
And I thy sorowe/frye no wight dothe but so
I raught nat though she stode and herde
How that thou sayest/but farwel I wol go
Adieu/be glad/god spede vs bothe two
Pour me this labour/and this busynesse
And of my spede/be thyn al the swetnesse

Tho Troylus gan doune on knees to fall
And Pandare in his armes heute fast
And sayd/nowe frye on the gretter all
Pet parde/god shal helpen at laste
And dredelesse/if that my lyfe may laste
And god to forme/to some of hem shal smerte
And pet me athynketh p this auaunt masterte

Nowe Pandare/I ony no more say
Thou wise/thou wost/thou maist/thou art al
Thy lyste my dethe/hole in thyn honde I lay
Helpe me nowe (quod he) Yes by my trouthe I
God yelde the frende/and this in special (shal
(Quod Troylus) that thou me recommaunde
To her that maye me to the dethe commaunde

This Pandarus tho desyrous to serue
His ful frende/he sayde in this manere
Farwel/and thynke I wol the thanke deserue
Haue here my trouth/and that thou shalt here
And went his way/thinkyng on this matere
And how he best might beseche her of grace
And fynde a tyme therto/and a place

For euery wight that hath a house to founde
He ernseth nat the werke for to begynne
With rafter honde/but he wol byde a stounde
And sende his herten fyue out fro within
Alderfirst his purpose for to wynne
Al this Pandare in his herte thought
And caste his werke/ful wysely er he wrought

But Troylus lay tho no lenger doune
But anon vp on his stede baye
And in the felde he played the lyoun
Wo was that grebe/p with him met that daye
And in the towne/his maner tho forthe ape
So goodly was/and gat him so in grace
That eche him loued/that loked in his face

For he became the frendlyest wight
The gentyleste/and eke the mooste free
The thrustyest/and eke the beste knight
That in his tyme was/or might be
Dede were his japes and his crueltye
His hygh porte/and his manere straunge
And eche of hem/gan for a vertue chaunge

Nowe let vs ryste of Troylus a stounde
That fareth lyke a man/that hurte is sore
And is somdele of abyng of his wounde
pleased wel/but feled no dele more
And as an easy patient the lore
Abyte/of him that gothe about his cure
And thus he dwelleth forthe his auenture

Explicit liber primus. J. i. ii.

OVt of these blacke wawes for to sayle
O wynde/ the wedir gynneth clere
For in this see/ the bote hath suche travayle
Of my conning/ that vnneth I it stere
This see clepe I the tempestous matere
Of disparyr that Troylus was in
But now we of hope the ualendes begyn

O lady myn that calleth arte Cleo
Thou be my spede fro this forthe/ & my muse
To ryme wel this boke tyl I have do
We nedeth here none other arte to vse
For why/ to every louer I me excuse
That of no sentement I this endyte
But out of latyn/ in my tonge it write

Wherfore I nyl have neyther thanke ne blame
Of al this worke/ but pray you mekely
Disblameth me/ if any worde be lame
For as myn auctour sayd/ so say I
Eke though I spake of love unfelyngly
No wonder is/ for it no thyng of newe is
A blynde man can not iugen wel in hewis

I knowe that in forme of speche is chaunge
Within a thousande yere/ and wordes tho
That hadden pris/ now wodir nyce & straunge
Thynketh hem/ and yet they spake hem so
And spedde as wel in love/ as men now do
Eke for to wynnen love/ in sondrie ages
In sondrie londes/ sondrie ben vsages

And for thy/ if it happe in any wyse
That here be any louer in this place
That herkeneth/ as the storie wol devyse
Howe Troylus came to his ladyes grace
And thinketh/ so nolde I nat love purchace
Or wondreth on his speche or his doyng
I not/ but it is to me no wondring

For every wight/ whiche that to Rome went
Halte nat o pathe/ ne alway o manere
Eke in some londe were al the game shent
If that men sarde in love/ as men don here
As thus/ in open doyng or in chere
In vysityng/ in forme/ or sayd our sawes
For thy men sayne/ eche coutre hath his lawes

Eke scarsely ben there in this place two
That have in love sayd lyke/ and done in al
For to this purpose this maye lyken the
And the right nought/ yet al is done or shal
Eke some men grave in tre/ some in stone wal
As it betyde/ but sithe I have begonne
Myne authour shal I folowe/ as I conne.

¶ Explicit Prohemium.

IN May that mother is of monthes glade
That fresh flours/ blewe/ white/ & rede
Ben quicke ayen/ that winter dede made
And ful of baume is fletyng every mede
Whan Phebus doth his bryghte beames spede
Right in the white Bole/ it so betyde
As I shal synge/ on Mayes day the thridde

That Pandarus for al his wyse speche
Felte eke his parte of loves shottes kene
That coude he never so wel of louyng preche
It made his hewe a daye ful ofte grene
So shope it/ that him fyl that day a tene
In love/ for whiche in wo to bedde he went
And made er it were daye ful many a went

The swalowe Progne/ with a sorouful lay
Whan morowe com/ gan make her waymentyng
Why she for shapen was/ and every day (fig
Pandare a bedde/ halfe in a slomberyng
Tyl she so nighe him made her waymentyng
Howe Thereus gan forthe her suster take
That with the nopse of her he gan awake

And to call/ and dresse him vp to tyse
Remembring him/ his erande was to done
From Troylus/ and eke his great empryse
And cast/ & knewe in good plyte was pmone
To done voyage/ and take his way ful soone
Vnto his neces paleys/ there besyde
Nowe Janus god of entre/ thou him gyde

Whan he was come vnto his neces place
Where is my lady/ to her fulle (quod he)
And they him tolde/ and in forthe he gan pace
And founde two other ladyes syt and she
Within a paued parlour/ and they thre
Herden a mayden hem reden the geste
Of the siege of Thebes/ whyle hem leste

And

(Quod Pandarus) madame god pou se
With pour boke/ and al the companye
Eighe Uncle myn/ welcome i wys (quod she)
And vp she rose/and by the honde in hye
She toke him fast/ and sayd/ this nighte thrye
To good mote it turne/of pou I mette
And with ꝑ worde/she dowyn on bēche him set

Ye nece/pe shal sarey wel the bet
If god wol al this yere (quod Pandarus)
But I am sory that I haue pou let
To herken of pour boke pe prayse thus
For goddes loue what sayethe it/tel it vs
Is it of loue/or some good pe me lere
Uncle (quod she) pour maystresse is nat here

With that they gonnen laugh/ꝛ tho she seyde
This romaunce is of Thebes/that we rede
And we haue herde how ꝑ king Layus deyde
Through Edippus his sonne/ꝛ al the derde
And here we stynten/at these letters rede
How the kyst/shop/as the boke can tell
Amphiorax/fyll through the grounde to hell

(Quod Pandarus) al this know I my selue
And al thassiege of Thebes/and the care
For herof ben there maked bokes twelue
But let be this/and tell me how pe fare
Do way pour barbe/ꝛ shewe pour face bare
Do way pour booke/vyse vp ꝛ let vs dannce
And let vs done to day some observaunce

Eighe/ god forbyd (quod she) be pe mad
Is that a wydowes lyfe/so god pou saue
By god pe maken me right sore adrad
pe ben so wylde/it semeth as pe rane
I sate me wel bet aye in a caue
To byde/and rede on holy sayntes lyues
Let maydens gon to daunce/ꝛ yonge wyues

As euer thryue I (quod this Pandarus)
Yet coulde I tel a thing/to don pou play
How Uncle dere (quod she) tel it vs
For goddes loue/is than thassiege aweye
I am of grekes ferde/so that I deye
Nay nay (qꝺ he) as euer mote I thryue
It is a thyng wel bet than suche syue

Ye holy god (quod she) what thing is that
What bet than suche syue: naghe nay pwis
For al this worlde/ne can I reden what
It shulde ben/some rape I trowe it is
And but pour seluen tell vs what it is
Why wyt us for to arede it al to seme
As helpe me god/I not what that pe meme

And I pour borowe/ne neuer shal (qꝺ he)
This thing be tolde to pou/as mote I thryue
And why Uncle myn/why so (quod she)
By god (qꝺ he) that wol I tel as blyue
For prouder woman is there none on syue
And pe it wyste/in al the towne of Trope
I rape nat/so euer haue I hope

Tho gan she wondren more than before
A thousande folde/ꝛ down her eyen caste
For neuer sythe the tyme that she was bore
To knowen thyng/desyred she so faste
And with a syke/she sayd him at the laste
Now Uncle myne/I hyl pou nat displese
Nor asken more/that may do pou disese

So after this/ with many wordes glade
And frendly tales/and with mery chere
Of this ꝛ that they speke/and gonnen wade
In many an vnsouth glad ꝛ depe matere
As frendes done/whan they bethe yfere
Tyl she gan asken him how Hector ferde
That was the towres wall/ꝛ grekes perde

Ful wel I thanke it god/ sayd Pandarus
Saue in his arme he hath a lytel wounde
And eke his fresshe brother Troylus
The wyse worthy Hector the seconde
In whom that euery vertue lyst habounde
As al trouthe/and al gentylesse
Wysdom/honour/fredom/and worthynesse

In good sayth eme (qꝺ she) that lyketh me
They saren wel/god saue hem bothe two
For trewly/I holde it great deynte
A kynges sonne in armes wel to do
And be of good condicions therto
For great power/and moral vertue here
To selde yseme in one persone yfere

In good faythe that is sothe (qꝺ Pandarus)
But by my trouth/ the kyng hath sones twey
That is to meane/ Hector and Troylus
That certaynly though that I shulde dey
They ben as bolde of dedes/ dare I sey
As any men that lyuen vnder sonne
Her might is wyde ykno we/ & what they cõne

Of Hector nedeth it no more for to tell
In al this worlde/ there nys a bettre knyght
Than he that is of worthynesse the well
And he wel more vertue hath than might
This knoweth many a wise & worthy wight
The same prise of Troylus I sey
God helpe me so/ I know nat suche twey

By god (quod she) of Hector that is sothe
Of Troylus the same thyng trowe I
For dredelesse/ men telleth that he dothe
In armes day by day/ so worthely
And beareth him here at home so gentilly
To euery wight/ that al prise hath he
Of hem that me were leuest praysed be

Ye say right sothe iwys (quod Pandarus)
For yesterday/ who so had with him ben
Myght haue wondred vpon Troylus
For neuer yet so thicke a swarme of bees
Ne flewe/ as grekes fro him ganne fleen
And through the felde in euery wightes eere
There was no crye/ but Troylus is there

Nowe here/ now there/ he hunted hem so faste
There nas but grekes bloode/ and Troylus
Nowe him he hurte/ and him al down he caste
Ape where he went it was arayed thus
He was her dethe/ and sheldes & lyfe for vs
That as ỳ day/ there durst him non withstode
Whyle that he held his blody swerde in honde

Therto he is the frendlyest man
Of great estate/ that euer I sawe my lyue
And where him lyst/ best felowshyp can
To suche as him thynketh able for to thriue
And with that worde/ tho Pãdarus as blyue
He toke his leaue/ and sayd I wol gon hen
Nay/ blame haue I vncle (quod she then)

What eyleth you to be thus wery soone
And namelyche of women/ wol ye so?
Nay sytteth downe/ by god I haue to doone
With you/ to speke of wysdome er ye go
And euery wight that was about hem tho
That herde that/ gan fersly away to stonde
Whyle they two had al that hem lyst in honde

Whan ỳ her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her estate/ and of her gouernaunce
(Quod Pandarus) nowe tyme is ỳ I wende
But yet I say/ aryseth let vs daunce
And caste your wydowes habyt to mischaũce
What lyst you thus your selfe to disfygure
Sythe you is tydde so glad an aduenture

But wel bethought/ for loue of god (qꝺ she)
Shal I nat wete what ye meane of this
No/ this thyng asketh leyser tho (quod he)
And eke me wolde moche greue ywis
If I it tolde/ and ye it toke amys
Yet were it bet my tonge to holde stylle
Than say a sothe/ ỳ were agenst your wylle

For nece/ by the goddesse Cynerue
And Iuppiter/ that maketh the thonder ryngē
And the blyssful Venus/ that I serue
Ye ben the woman in this worlde lyuyng
Without en paramoure/ to my wetyng
That I best loue/ and lothest am to greue
And that ye wetyn wel your selfe I leue

Iwis myn vncle (quod she) graunt mercy
Your frendshyp haue I founden euer yet
I am to no man holden trewly
So moche as you/ and haue so lytel quyt
And with the grace of god/ emforth my wyt
As in my gylte/ I shal you neuer offende
And if I haue er this I wol amende

But for the loue of god/ I you beseche
As ye be he/ that I loue moste and tryste
Let be to me your fremed maner speche
And say to me your entente/ what you lyste
And with that worde/ her vncle anoon her kyst
And sayd/ gladly my leue nece derre
Take it for good/ that I shal say you here

Wil

Bit that she gan her eyen downe to caste
And Pandarus to coughe gan a lyte
And sayd: Nece alwaye so/to the laste
How so it be/ that some men hem delyte
With subtel artes her tales for tendyte
yet for al that in her entencioun
her tale is al for some conclusioun

And sithe thende is euery tales strength
And this mater to so behoueth
What shulde I paynt/ or drawen it on length
To you that ben my frende so faithfully
And with that worde he gan right inwardly
Beholden her/ and softely in her face
And sayd/ oh suche a myrrour good grace

Than thought he thus/ if I my tale endyte
Aught harde/or make a proeme any whyle
She shal no fauour haue therin but lyte
And trowe I wolde her in my wyl begyle
For tendre wyttes werken al be wyle
Where as they can nat playnlych vnderfonde
For thy her wyt to seruen wol I fonde

And loked on her in a besy wyse
And she was ware that he beheld her so
Ah lorde (qd she) so faste ye me auyse
Dawe ye me neuer er nowe/ what say ye no?
Yes yes (quod he) and bet wol er I go
But vp my trouthe I thought nowe/if ye
Be fortunate/for nowe men shal it se

For euery wight/some goodly aunture
Somtyme is shape/if he it can receyuen
But if he nyl take of it no cure
Whan that it cometh/but wylfully it weyuen
Lo/neyther rase nor fortune him deceyuen
But right his owne slouth & wretchednesse
And suche a wight is for to blame I gesse

Good aunture/ O belle nece haue ye
Ful lightly founden/and ye conne it take
And for the loue of god/and eke of me
Latche it anon/leste aunture slake
What shulde I lenger proeme of it make
Vene me your honde for in this worlde is noon
If that you lyst a wight so wel begon

And sythe I spoke of good entencioun
As I to you haue tolde wel here before
And loue as wel your honour and renoun
As any creature in al the worlde yboure
By al the othes that I haue you swore
And ye be wrothe therfor/or were I lyf
Ne shal I neuer sene you eft with eye

Bethe nat agaste/ne quaketh nat/ wherto
Ne chaungeth nat for feare so your hewe
For hardely the worste of this is do
And though my tale as nowe be to you newe
Yet trust alway/ye shal me fynde trewe
And were it thyng ȳ me thought vnsittyng
To you wolde I no suche tales bring

Nowemy good eme/for goddes loue I pray
(Quod she) come of and tel me what it is
For bothe I am agaste what ye wol say
And eke me longeth it to wete ywis
For whether it be wel/or be amys
Say on/let me nat in this feare dwell
So wol I done/nowe herkeneth I shal tell

Nowe nece myne/the kynges dere sonne
The good wyse worthy/fresshe and free
Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne
The noble Troylus so sheneth the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane be
Lo here is al/ what shulde I more sey
Doth what you lyst to make him lyue or dey

But if ye let him dye/I wol sterue
Haue here my trouthe/nere I nyl nat lyen
Al shulde I with this knyfe my throte kerue
With that the teeres burste out of his eyen
And sayd/if that ye done vs bothe dyen
Thus gyltlesse/than haue ye yfysshed fayre
What mende ye/though ȳ we bothe apayre

Alas/he whiche that is my lorde so dere
That trewe may/that noble gentyl knyghte
That naught despyeth/but your frendly chere
I se him dyen/there he gothe vpright
And hasteth him/with al his full might
For to ben slayne/if his fortune assente
Alas that god you suche a beaute sente

If it

If it be so that ye so cruel be
That of his dethe you lyste nought to reche
That is so trewe and worthy/ as we se
No more than of a raper or a wrecche
If ye be suche/ your beaute may nat strecche
To make amendes of so cruel a dede
Auysement is good before the nede

Wo worthe the fayre Grene vertuelesse
Wo worthe that herbe also that dothe no bote
Wo worthe the beaute that is routhlesse
Wo worth that wight that trede eche vnd fote
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote
If therwithal in you ne be no routhe
Than is harme ye lyuen by my trouthe

And also thynke wel/ that this is no gaude
For me were leuer/ thou/ I/ and he
Were honged/ than I shulde ben his baude
As highe as men myght on vs al se
I am thyne Eme/ the shame were to me
As wel as the/ if that I shulde assent
Through myne abet/ ye he thy honour shent

Now vnderstonde/ for I you nought requere
To bynde you to hym/ through no behefte
Saue onely that ye make him better chere
Than ye han done er this/ and more feste
So that his lyfe be saued at the leste
This al and some/ z playnly our intente
God helpe me so/ I neuer other mente

Lo/ this requeste is nought but sykerwys
Ne doute of treson parde is there none
I set the worste/ that ye dreden this
Quod she wolde wondre to sene him come z gone
Therayenst answere I thus anone
That euery wight/ but he be foole of fynde
Wol deme it loue of frendshyp in his mynde

What/ who wol demen though he se a man
To temple gon/ that he the ymages creteth
Thynke ek/ howe wel and wisely that he can
Gouerne him selfe/ ye he nothing forzeteth
That wher he cometh/ he pris z thonke hi geteth
And ek therto he shal come here so selde
What force were it/ thogh al ye town beheldo

Suche loue of frendes reigneth al this town
And blue you in that mantel euermo
And god so wys be my saluacion
As I haue sayd/ youre best us to do so
But good neue/ alway to fynde hire wo
So let your daunger/ sugred ben alyte
That of his dethe/ ye be nat al to wyte

Creseyde/ whiche ye herde him in this wyse
Thought/ I shal seken what he meneth ywis
Nowe eme (qd she) what wolde ye deuyse?
What is your rede/ I shulde done of this?
That is wel sayd qd he/ certayne best is
That ye him loue ayen for his louyng
As loue for loue/ is skylful guerdonyng

Thynke ek howe elde waxeth euery houre
In eche of you/ a parte of beaute
And therfore/ er that age the deuoure
Go loue/ for olde there wol no wight of the
Let this prouerbe/ a loze vnto you be
To late ywarre/ qd beaute/ whan it paste
And elde daunteth daunger/ at the laste

The fynges foole is wont to crye loude
Whan ye him thinketh a woman bereth her hye
So longe mote ye lyue/ and al proude
Tyl crowes fete growe vnder youre eye
And sende you than a myrrour in to pryse
In whiche that ye may se your face a morowe
Nece/ I bydde wysshe you nomore sorowe

With this he sykte/ and caste downe the hed
And she began to brest a wepe anon
And said/ alas for wo/ why nere I ded
For of this worlde/ the fayth is al agone
Alas/ what shulden straunge to me done
Whan he that for my beste frende I wende
Rate me to lane/ and shulde it me defende

Alas/ I wolde haue trusted douteles
That if that I/ through my disauenture
Had loued eyther him/ or Achilles
Hector/ or any maner creature
Ye nolde haue had no mercy ne mesure
On me/ but alway had me in repreue
Thus false wolde alas/ who may it leue

That

What? is this al the ioye and al the feest?
Is this youre rede? is this my ioyfull cote?
Is this the fyry mede of youre beheest?
Is al this paynim prouysse sayd (alas)
Right for this cyte/O lady myn Pallas
Thou in this dredeful caste for me purueye
For so astonyed am I/that I dey

With that she gan ful sorowfully to syke
Let may it be no bet (quod Pandarus)
By god I shal no more come here this weke
And god to saue/that any vntrouthe thus
I se wel now/ye setten lyghte of vs
Or of oure drithe alas/I wofull wrecche
Right for pat cyte/of vs were nought to recche

O cruell god/o dispytous Marte
O furies thre of hell/on you I crye
So let me neuer out of this house departe
If that I meane harme or vilanye
But sythe I se my lorde mote nedes dye
And I with hym/here I me shryue and sey
That wickedly ye deme vs bothe deye

But sythe it lyketh you/that I be dede
By Neptunus that god is of the see
Fro this forthe shal I neuer ete bred
Tyl I myn owne herte blode may se
For certayne I wol dye as soone as he
And vp he sterte/and on his way he raught
Tyll she ayayne hym by the lappe caught

Creseyde/whiche pat wel nygh starfe for fere
So as she was the feruentlyest wight
That myght be/and herde eke with her ere
And saw the sorowful ernest of the knyght
And in his prayer saw eke none vnright
And for the harme eke that myght fall more
Shee gan to rewe/and dredde her wonder sore

And thought thus/vnhappes falleth thikke
Alday for loue/and in suche maner cases
As men hen cruel in hem selfe and wikke
And if thes men slee here hem selfe/alas
In my presence/it myght be no solas
What men wolde of it deme/I can not say
It nedeth me ful slyghtly for to play

And with a sorowful syghe/she sayd thus
Ah lorde/what me is gyden a sory chaunce
For myn estate hyngth in a iuopardye
And eke myn owne lyfe lythe in balaunce
But natheles/with goddes gouernaunce
I shal so done/myn honour shal I kepe
And eke his lyfe/and slynte for to wepe

Of harmes two/the lesse is for to chese
Yet had I leuer maken hym good chere
In honour/than myn owne lyfe to lese
Ye sayne ye nothyng elles me requere?
Nay wys (quod she) myn owne nere dere:
Now wel (quod she) & I wol done my payne
I shal myn herte ayen my lust constrayne

But yet I nyl not holden hym in honde
Ne loue a man/that can I naught ne may
Ayenst my wyl/but elles wol I fonde
Myn honour saue/plesen hym fro day to day
Therto nolde I not ones haue sayd nay
But that I dredde/as in my fantasye
But cause cause/aye ceseth maladye

But here I make a protestacion
That in this processe if pe depart go
That certaynly/for no fauacion
Of you/though that ye sterue bothe two
Though al the worlde on o day be my so
Ne shal I neuer on hym haue other routhe
I graunte wel (quod Pandare) by my trouthe

But may I trust wel to you (quod she)
That of this thyng that ye han higth me here
Ye wol it holde truely vnto me
Ye doutelesse (quod she) myn Vncle dere
Ne that I shal haue cause in this matere
(Quod she) to playne/or ofter you to prache
Why no parde/what nedeth more speche

Tho fyll they in other tales glade
Tyl at the laste/o good eme (quod she tho)
For loue of god whiche that vs bothe made
Tel me how first pe mystery of this wo
Wot none of it but ye/he sayd no
Say he wel speke of loue (quod she) I pray
Tel me/for I the bet me shal purueye

Tho

Tho Pandarus a lyte gan to smyle
And sayd: By my trouthe I shal nowe tell
This other day/ nat gone ful longe whyle
Within the paleys gardyn by a well
Ganne he and I/ wel halfe a day to dwell
Right for to speken of ay ordynaunce
How we the Grekes myghten disauaunce

Soone after that we gone for to lepe
And eastely with our darres to and fro
Tyl at the last/ he sayd/ he wolde slepe
And on the grasse adowne/ he layde him tho
And I after gan to romien to and fro
Tyl that I herde/ as I walked alone
How he began ful wofully to grone

Tho gan I stalke him softely behynde
And sekerly the sothe for to sayne
As I can clepe aperi nowe to my mynde
Right thus to Loue/ he gan him for to playne
He sayd: Loue/ haue routh vpon my payne
Al haue I ben rebel in myne entent
Nowe (thea culpa) lorde I me repent

O god/ that at thy dispositioun
Ledest the fyne/ by iuste purueyaunce
Of euery wight/ my lowe confessioun
Accepte in gree/ and sende me suche penaunce
As lyketh the/ but from desesperaunce
That maye my goost departe alway fro the
Thou be my shylde/ for thy benignyte

For certes lorde/ so soore hath she me wounded
That stode in blanke/ with lokyng of her eyen
That to myne herte botome it is yfounded
Through which I wot/ þ I mote nedes dyen
This is þ worst/ I dare me nought bewreyen
And wel the sooter ben the gledes rede
That men hyen wery with asshen pale & dede

With that he smote his herd adowne anone
And gan to mutter/ I nat what trewly
And I with that gan styl awaye to gone
And lete therof/ as nothyng wyst had I
And come agayne anon and stoode him by
And sayd alaske/ ye slepen al to longe
It semeth nought that loue doth you wronge

That slepen so/ that no man may you wake
Who seye euer ere this so dul a man
Ye fiende (quod he) do pe your herdes ake
For loue/ and lette me lyuen as I can
Out lorde that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as frysshe a countenaunce
As though he shulde haue led the weue daunce

This passed forth/ tyl nowe thes other day
It fel that I come rompyng al alone
In to his chambre/ & founde how þ he lay
Vpon his bedde: wat may so soze grone
Ne herde I neuer/ and what was his intone
Ne wyst I nought/ for as I was cõmyng
Al sodainly/ he lefte his complaynyng

Of whiche I toke somwhat suspectioun
And nere I come/ and founde hym wepe fast
And god so wyse be my saluatioun
As neuer of thyng had I no routh more
For neyther with engyn/ ne with no boost
Vnnethes myght I fro the dethe him kepe
That pet sele I myne herte for hym wepe

And god wote neuer sithe that I was borne
Was I so besy no man for to preche
Ne neuer was to wight so depe swore
Er he me tolde/ who myght bey his speche
But nowe to you rehersen al his speche
Or al his woful wordes for to sowne
Ne byd me nought/ but pe wol se me swowne

But for to saue his lyfe/ and eke nought
And to non harme of you/ thus am I bounde
And for þ loue of god that so hath wrought
Suche cheer him doth/ that he & I may lyue
Nowe haue I platte to you myne herte shryue
And sithe pe wote that myne entent is clene
Take hede therof/ for none yuel I mene

And right good thryfte/ I pray to god haue pe
That han suche one praught without enuye
And be pe wyse/ as pe be fayre to se
Wel in the ryngc/ than is the Ruby sette
Here were neuer two so wel ymette
Whan pe ben bothe al hole/ as be ye youre
Here mighty god pet graūt vs se þ houre

Lay

Cupidoo / spake I nat: I hid (quod he)
Ye helpe me gode / ye shenden euery dele
I mercy dere mine / quod (quod she)
What so I spoke / I meant nought but wele
By thare the god / that helmed is of stele
So me bethe rad / beth stedefast and trewe
Or elles wel (quod she) forwery be it fro me

Whan this he tolde his frende / and fonne he went
Pe lode so we he was glad / and wel bygon
Creseyde arose / no longer she ne stent
But streight in to her closet went anon
And set her do wne / as stylle as any stone
And euery worde gan vp & do wne in wynde
That he had sayd / as it came her to mynde

And wope sondele astoned in her thought
Right for the newe case / but whan that she
Was ful auysed / tho founde she right nought
Of peryll / why that she ought a fered be
For many may sone of possibylite
A woman se / his herte may tobreste
And she not sone apert / but if her leste

But as she sate alone / and thought thus
Thascrye arose at fourmoche al without
And men cryed in the strete / se Troylus
Hath right now put to flyght the grekes rout
With that gonne al her meyne for to shout
Ago we se / and vp the pates wyde
For thorugh this strete he mot to Palays ryde

For other way is fro the gates none
Of Dardanus there open is the cheyne
With that come he / and al his folke anone
In easy pace rydyng / in routes fourteyne
Right as his happy day was sothe to seyne
For whiche men sayth may not destourbed be
That shal betyde of necessyte

This Troylus sate on his bayo stede
Al armed fro his hed / ful ryalych
And wounded was his horse / & gan to blede
On whiche he rode a pace ful softely
But soothe a sorye syght it truely
As was on hym / was nat wel to seyn
To loke on thare / that god is of Armyn

So fyl of armes / and a shyld he bare
He was to sene / ful fetysly of fygures
Fro thens he had a baby / and myght
To day that thyng / as wel as hardynesse
And ofte to sene hym in the gates wasse
So fresshe / so yonge / so lusty semed he
It was ay ioye vpon hym for to se

His helme to seleny was in thynly places
That vp a tyssue hange / his backe behynde
His sheld to dasshed with swerdes & maces
In whiche men myght many an vnkouth fynde
That thyder had come / nere fe and ynde
And ape the people cryed / here comyth our ioy
And next his brother / holder vp of Troye

For whiche he wept a lytel reed for shame
Whan he so herde the people vpon hym cryen
That to beholde / it was a noble game
How sobrely he caste adowne his eyen
Creseyde anon gan al his chere espyen
And let it so sothe in her herte synke
That to her selfe she sayd / who gaue me drinke

For al her owne thought / she woye al reed
Remembring her right thus / so this is he
Which that myn vncle swereth he mot be deed
But I ay hym same merry and pyte
And with that thought for pure ashamed she
Gan in her hed to pull / and that as faste
Whyle he and al the people faythly paste

And gan to caste / and rollen vp and down
Within her thought his excellent prowesse
And his estate / and also his renoun
His wytte / his spap / and eke his gentylesse
But moste her fauour was / for his distresse
Was al for her / and thought it were a routhe
To sleny suche one / yf that he wer in trouthe

Nowe might some enuyous iangle thus
This was a sodayne loue / how we might it be
That she so lightly loued Troylus
Right for the first syght: ye parde?
Nowe who so sayth so / mote he neuer the
For euery thyng a gynnyng hath it nede
Or al be wrought / withouten any drede

For

For I seye not/ that she so sodaynly
Yaf him her loue/ but that she gan enclyne
To lyken him tho/ and I shall telle you why
And after that/ his manhode and his pyne
Made that loue within her gan to myne
For whiche by processe/ and by good seruyce
He wanne her loue/ and in no sodayne wyse

And also blyssful Venus we[illegible] arayed
Satte in her seuenth house of heuen tho
Disposed wele/ and with aspectes payed
To helpe sely Troylus of his wo
And sothe to sayne/ she nas nat al a foe
To Troylus/ in his nauryte
God wote/ that wele the sooner sped he

Nowe lette vs stynt of Troylus a throwe
That rydeth forthe/ and lette vs turne fast
Vnto Creseyde/ that heng her hed ful lowe
There as she sate alone/ and gan to cast
Wheron she wolde apoynt her at the last
If it so were/ her Emetre wolde cesse
For Troylus/ vpon her for to pesse

And forde so she gan in her thought argue
In thes mater/ of whiche I haue you tolde
And what to don best were/ and what eschue
That plyted she ful ofte in many folde
Now was her hert warme/ now was it colde
And what she thought/ so what shal I write
As myne authour lysteth for tendyte

She thought first/ that Troylus persone
She knewe by syght/ and eke his gentylnesse
And thus she sayd/ al were it nought to done
To graunt him loue/ yet for his worthynesse
It were honour with play/ & with gladnesse
In honeste/ with suche a forde to deale
For myne estate/ and also for his heale

Eke wel wot I/ my kynges sonne is he
And sithe he hath to se me suche delyte
If I wolde vtterlythe his syght flye
Peraunter he myght haue me in despite
Through which I myst stonde in worse plyte
Nowe were I wyse/ me hast to purchase
Without nede/ there I may stonde in grace

In euery thyng/ I wote there lyth measure
For thogh a man forbyde dronkenesse
He nought forbydeth/ that euery creature
Be dronkelesse for alwaye as I gesse
Eke lyke I wel for me is his distresse
I ne ought nat for that thyng him despise
Sithe it is so/ he meaneth in good wyse

And eke I knowe/ of longe tyme agone
His thewes good/ and that he nys nat nyce
Ne vauntour/ sayne men/ certayne he is non
To wyse is he/ to done so great a vyce
Ne als I nyl him neuer so cherice
That he shal make auaunt by iust cause
He shal me neuer bynde in suche a clause

Nowe sette I case/ the hardest is pleyn
Men myght demen that he sought me
What dishonour were it vnto me thoo?
Maye suche him lette of that/ why nay parde?
I knowe also/ and alwaye herd and se
How souen women al this towne about
Be they the wyse? why nay without dout?

I thynke eke howe/ he worthy is to haue
Of al this noble towne the thrustyest
That woman is/ if she her honour saue
For out and out he is the worthyest
Saue oncly Hector/ whiche that is the best
And yet his lyfe lythe al nowe in my cure
But suche is loue/ and eke myne auenture

Ne me to loue/ a wonder is it nought
For wel wot I my selfe/ so god me spede
Al wol I that none wyst of this thought
I am one the fayrest out of drede
And goodlyest/ who so that taketh hede
And so men sayne my al the towne of Troye
What wonder is/ though he of me haue ioye

I am myne owne woman wel at ese
I thanke it god/ as after myne estate
Right yonge/ and stonde vnlet of suche lese
Without en housbe/ and suche debate
Shal no husbonde sayne to me checke mate
For either they ben ful of iealousye
Or mansterful/ or soone nowe?

What

What shal I done: to what fyne lyue I thus:
Shal I not loue / my ryse if that me lyst:
What parde my I am not rebuked
And though that I myn herte set at reste
Vpon this knyght / that is the worthyest
And kepe alway myn honour / and my name
By al right it may do me no shame

But right as whan the sonne shyneth bright
In Marche / that chaungeth oft tymes hys face
And that a cloude is put with wynde to flight
Which ouerspriat the sonne / as for a space
A cloudy thought gan through her soule pace
That ouerspradde her bright thoughtes all
So that for feare almost she gan to fall

That thought was this: Alas sythe I am fre
Shulde I now loue / and put in ieopardye
My sykernesse / and thralle my herte
Alas / how durste I thynken that folye:
May I not wel in other folke aspye
Her dredeful ioy / her constreynt / & her payne
Her loueth non / yf she ne hath way to playne

For loue is yet the most stormy lyfe
Right of hym selfe / that euer was begonne
For euer some mistrust / or newe stryfe
Ther is in loue / some cloude ouer the sonne
Therto we wretched women nothyng conne
Whan he is wo / but wepe and syt and thynke
Our wreche is this / our owne wo to drynke

Also wicked tonges ben so prest
To speke vo harme / ese men ben so entrewe
That right anon as resseth is her lest
So ceseth loue / and fouthe to loue a newe
But harme ydo is done / who so it rewe
For though these men for loue hem fyrst to rede
Ful sharpe begynnyng bredeth ofte at ende

How ofte tyme may men rede and sene
The treson / that to women hath be do:
To wha t ende is fayre loue / I can not sene
Or where bestemeth it / whan it is go
Ther is no wyght that wote / I trowe so
Where it bestandeth / so / no wight on it speketh
That erst was nothyng / vn to naught fareth

How best (if I loue) the muste I be
To plesen hem / that iangle of loue / & demen
And coyen hem / that they say no harme of me
For though there be no cause / yet hem semen
Al be for harme / that folke her frendes quemen
And who may stoppen euery wicked tonge:
Or soune of belles / whyle ỹ they ben ronge:

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And sayd / he which that nothing vndertaketh
Nothyng atchieueth / be him lothe or dere
And with an other thought her herte quaketh
Than slepeth hope / and after drede awaketh
Now hote now in colde / but thus betwixen twey
She tryste her vp / & went her for to pley

Adowne the stayre / anonright tho she wente
In to her gardyn / with her neces thre
And vp & downe / they maden many a wente
Ysoppe and she / Tarbe / and Antigone
To playen / that it ioy was to se
And other of her women a great route
Her folowed in the gardyn al aboute

This yerde was large / & rayled al the alepes
And shadowed wel / wt blosomy bowes grene
And benched newe / and sonded al the wayes
In which she walketh arme in arme betwene
Tyl at the laste Antigone the shene
Gan on a troyan songe to syngen clere
That it an heuen was / her voyce to here

She said: O Loue / to whom I haue / & shal
Ben humble subiect / trewe in myn entent
As I best can / to you forde yeue pese al
For euer more myn herte fust to rent
For neuer yet thy grace no wight sent
So blyssful cause as me / my lyfe to lede
In al ioye and surete / out of drede

The blyssful god / hath me so wel beset
In loue iwys / that al that bereth lyfe
Ymagynen ne couldе so wel to bet
For lorde without en ielousye or stryfe
I loue one / whiche that most is ententyfe
To serue wel / vnweryly or vnfayned
That euer was / & lefte with harme destayned

K.8. As he

As he that is the wel of worthynesse
Of trouthe grounde/myrrour of goodlyhede
Of wytte Apollo/ stone of sykernesse
Of vertue rote/of luste synder and heed
Through whiche is al sorowe fro me deed
Iwys I loue hym best/so dothe he me
Nowe good thrist haue he/ where soeuer he be

Wham shulde I thanken but you god of loue
Of al this blysse/in whiche to bathe I gynne
And thanked be ye lorde/for that I loue
This is the right lyfe that I am inne
To flemen al maner vyce and synne
This doth me so to vertue for to entende
That day by day I in my wyll amende

And who that sayth ꝑ for to loue is vyce
Or thraldom/though he sele in it distresse
He eyther is envyous/or right nyce
Or is vnmyghty for his shrewdnesse
To louen/for suche maner folke I gesse
Diffamen loue/as nothyng of hym knowe
They speken/but they wente neuer his bowe

What is the sonne worse of hynde right?
Though ꝑ a man/for sekelnesse of his eyen
May nat endure on it to se for bright
Or loue the worse/that wretches on it cryen
No wele is worthe/ that may no sorowe dryen
And for thy/who that hath an heed of verre
Fro caste of stones warr hym in the werre

But I with al myn herte and al my might
As I haue sayd/wol loue vnto my laste
My dere herte/and al myn owne knyght
In whiche myn herte growen is so faste
And his in me/that it shal euer laste
Al dredde I first loue hym to begyn
Nowe wot I wel there is no peryll in

And of her songe right with ꝑ worde she stent
And ther withal/nowe nere (qꝺ Creseyde)
Who made this songe/now with so good entēt
Antygone ansˢwerde anon/and sayde
Madame iwys the goodlyest mayde
Of great estate in al the towne of Troye
And led her lyfe in moste honour and ioye

Forsothe so semeth it by her songe
Quod tho Creseyde/ and gan therw' to syke
And sayd: Lorde/is there suche blysse amongs
These louers/ as they can sayen eadis
Ye wysse quod fresshe Antigone the whyle
For al the folke that haue or ben on lyue
Ne conne wel the blysse of loue discryue

But wene ye that euery wretche wote
The parfite blysse of loue/ why nay yvis
They wenen al be loue/ if one be hote
Do wap do waye/ they wote nothyng of this
Wenne mote aslon of sayntes/ if it is
Ought faire in heuen/ & why: for they can tel
And aske fendes/ if it be foule in hel

Creseyde vnto ꝑ purpose naught answerde
But sayd/ iwys it wol be nyght as faste
But euery worde/ whiche that she of her herde
She gan to printen in her herte faste
And ape gan loue her lasse for to agaste
Than it dyd erst/and synken in her herte
That she waxe somwhat able to conuerte

The dayes honour/and the heurns eye
The nyghtes foe/ al this clepe I the sonne
Gan westren faste/& downwarde for to wie
As he that had his dayes course ronne
And white thinges wexen dymme and donne
For lacke of light/and sterres for to apere
That she and al her folke in went yfere

So whan it tyded her to gon to reste
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte
She sayd/ that to slepen wel her leste
Her women sone tyl her bed her brought
Whā al was huste/than lay she styl & thought
Of al this thyng the maner and the wyse
Reherse it nedeth nat/for ye ben wyse

A nyghtyngale vpon a Cedre grene
Vnder the chambre wall/there as she lay
Ful loude songe ayen the moone shene
Paraventure in his bryddes wyse a lay
Of loue/that made her herte fressh & gay
That herkened she so longe in good entente
Til al the laste the dede slepe her hente

And

And as she slept/anon right she her mette
How that an Egle fethered white as bone
Under her brest had longe clawes sette
And out her herte he rente/and that anone
And dyd his herte in to her brest to gone
Of which she nought agrose/ne nothing smerte
And forthe he flyeth/with herte lefte for herte

¶ Now let her slepe/& we our tales holde
Of Troylus/that in to paleys ryden
Fro the scarmyshe of which I tolde
And in his chamber sate/and hath abyden
Tyl two or thre of his messangers yeden
For Pandarus/and soughten hym ful faste
Tyl they hym founde/& brought hym at the laste

This Pandarus came leapyng in at ones
And sayd thus/ who hath ben wel yserte
To day with swerdes/& stronge stones
But Troylus / that hath caught hym an hete
And gan to rape/& sayd/lorde ye sweete
But ryse and sit be soupe/& go to reste
And he answerde hym/do we as the leste

With al the haste goodly as they myght
They spedde hem fro the souper/and to bedde
And every wight out at the dore hym dyght
And wyder hem lyst/upon his way hym sped
But Troylus thought that his herte bledde
For wo/tyl that he herde some tydynge
And sayd frende/shal I now wepe or synge

(Quod Pandarus) be stylle & let me slepe
And do on thyn hoode/thy nedes spedde be
And chese if thou wolt synge/daunce/or lepe
At shorte wordes thou shalte fro me me
Sir/ my nece wol don wel by the
And loue the beste/by god & by my trouthe
But lasse of pursuit maste it on thy slouthe

For thus forthy I have thy werke begon
Fro day to day/tyl this day by the mosse me
Her loue of frendshyp have I to the won
And therfore hath she sayd her self to me
Agate a foote ne stamyned of thy fo we
What shulde I longer sermon of it holde
Ye yf have herde before/al ye hym tolde

But right as floures through the cold of night
Iclosed/stoupen on her stalkes lowe
Redressen hem upon the sonne bright
And spreden on her bryde coarse by rowe
Right so gan tho his eyen up to throwe
This Troylus/and sayd: O Venus dere
Thy might thy grace/yheryed be it here

And to Pandarus he held up both his hondes
And sayd/lorde al thyn be that I have
For I am holt/and bounden bey my bondes
A thousande Troyes/ who so that me yaue
Ech after other/god so wys me saue
Ne myght me so glade/ so myn herte
It sparcleth so for ioye it wol to sterte

But lorde how shal I don? how shal I lyuen
Whan shal I meryt my dere herte se?
How shal this longe tyme away be driuen?
Tyl that thou be apert at her fro me
Thou mayst answere/abyde abyde: but he
That hangeth by the necke/sothe to sayne
In great disease abydeth for the payne

Al easily now we/for the loue of Marte
(Qd Pandarus) for every thing hath tyme
So longe abyde/tyl that the nyght departe
For al so syker as thou syest here by me
And god to some/ I wol be there at prime
And for thy werke somwhat/as I shal saye
Or on some other wyght this charge laye

For parde god wot/I have ever yet
Ben redy the to serue/and this nyght
Have I wat sayned/but ensoothe my wyt
Done al thy lust/and shal with al my might
Do now we as I shal sayne/and fare aright
And if thou nylte/wyte al thy selfe thy care
Do me is naught alonge thyn yuel fare

I wote wel that thou wyser arte than I
A thousande folde: but if I were as thou
God helpe me so/as I wolde vtterly
Right of myn owne honde wryte her now
A letter/in whiche I wolde her tellen how
I sarde amyssse/and her beseche of routhe
Now me helpe thy selfe/& leave it for no slouthe

R.f.ii. And

And I my self shal therwith to her goy
And whan thou woste ꝑ I am with her there
Worthe thou vp on a courser right anon
ye hardely/right in thy beste gere
And ryde forth by ꝑ place/as naught ne were
And thou shalt fynde be (if I may) sytting
At some wyndowe/in to the strete lokyng

And if the lyst/than mayst thou be salue
And vpon me make thou thy countenaunce
But by thy lyfe bewarre/and faste eschue
To tarryen ought/god shyld be fro myschaūce
Ryde forthe thy way & holde thy gouernaūce
And we shal speke of the somwhat I trowe
Whan thou arte gon/to do thyn erres glowe

Touchyng thy lettre thou art wyse ynough
I wot thou nylte it deignelyche endyte
As make it with these argumentes tough
Ne scrupeynyssh or craftely thou it wryte
Beblotte it with thy teeres eke alyte
And if thou wryte a goodly worde al soste
Though it be good/reherse it nat to oste

For though the beste harpour vpon lyue
Wolde on the beste sowned ioly harpe
That euer was/with al his fyngers fyue
Touche aye o stryngе/or aye o warble harpe
Were his nayles poynted neuer so sharpe
It shulde make euery wight to dull
To here his glee/& of his strokes full

Ne iombre eke no discordant thing yfere
As thus/to vsen termes of physyke
In loues termes holde of thy matere
The forme alway/and do that it be lyke
For if a peyntour wolde paynte a pyke
With asses fete/and herded as any ape
It cordeth nat/so were it but a iape

This counsayle lyked wel vnto Troylus
But as a dredeful louer/he sayd this
Alas my dere brother Pandarus
I am ashamed for to wryte ilyps
Lest of myn wrytenge I sayd amys
Or that she nolde it for dispyte rereyue
Than were I ded/ther might it nothyng weyue

To that Pandare answerde/if the lest
Do that I say/and let me therwith gon
For by that lorde that formed erst and west
I hope of it to bring answere anon
Right of her honde/& if that thou wylt non
Let be/and sory mote he bey his lyue
Ayenst thy lust/that helpeth the to thryue

(Quod Troylus) depardieux yche assente
Sythe that the lyst/I wol aryse and wryte
And blyssful god pray yche with good entente
The vsage and the lettre I shal endyte
So spede it/and thou Dyneruа the whyte
Yeue thou me wyt/my lettre to deuyse
And set hun do wry/& wrote right in this wyse

First he gan her his right lady call
His hertes lyfe/his lust/his sorowes leche
His blysse/and eke these other termes all
That in suche case ye louers al seche
And in ful humble wyse/as in his speche
He gan hun recōmaunde vnto her grace
To tell al howe/it asseth moste space

And after this ful lowly he her prayde
To be nought wrothe/though he of his folye
So hardy was to her to wryte/and sayde
That loue it made/or els muste he dye
And pitously gan mercy for to crye
And after that he sayd/and lyed ful loude
Hun selfe was lytel worthe/& lasse he coude

And that she wolde hane his cōnyng excused
That lytel was/and eke he dredde her so
And his vnworthynesse aye he accused
And after that than gan he tel his wo
Out that was endelesse without ende so
And said/he wolde in trouth alway hun holde
And redde it ouer/and gan the lettre folde

And with his salte teeres gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet/and it sette
Vpon the wexe deliuerlyche and rathe
Therwith a thousande tymes/or he lette
He syghe tho the lettre that he shatte
And sayd/lettre a blyssful destyne
The shapen is/my lady shal the se

This

This Pandare tok the letter/& that he tyme
I more we/ and to his neces paleys fiersly
And fast he swore/that it was passed prime
And gan to rape/ and sayd: ywis myne herte
So fressh it is/ although it sore smerte
I may nat slepe neuer a whapes more we
I haue a sory wo/ a lusty sorowe

Creseyde/ whan that she her [illegible]herde
With dredeful herte/ and desyred to here
The cause of his cõmynge/ thus answerde
Now we by your fathe myn Vncle (q̃ she) dere
What maner wyndes gydeth you now here
Tel vs your sory wo/and your penaunce
How we set fourth be ye putte in lones daunce

By god (q̃ he) I hope alwaye behynde
And to longhe/ it thoughte her herte brest
(Quod Pãdarus) lose alway that ye fynde
Game in myn hood/ but herkneth if you lest
Ther is right now cõe in to the towne a gest
A gentle esquyre/ and telleth newe thynges
For whiche I come to tel you newe tidynges

In to the gardyn go we/ and ye shal here
Al precely of this a longe sermoun
With that they wenten arme in arme yfere
In to the gardyn fro the chambre doun
And whan he was so farre / that ỳ soun
Of that he spake/ no man herein myght
He sayd her thus/ and out the letter plyght

Lo/ he that is al hooly yours free
Hym recõmaundeth lowly to your grace
And sente you thes letter here by me
Auyseth you on it/ whan ye han space
And of some goodly answere you purchace
Or elles me god so/ playnly for to sayne
He may nat longe lyuen for his payne

Ful dredefully tho gan she stonde fyxt
And toke it nat/ but al her humble chere
Gan for to chaunge/ and sayd scripte nor byt
For loue of god/ that toucheth suche matere
Ne binge me none/ and also Vncle dere
To myne estate haue more regarde I pray
Than to this lust/ what shulde I more say

And loketh nowe if this be resonable
And letteth nat for fauour ne for slouthe
To sayne a sothe/ no we is it couenable
To myn estate/ by god and by my trouthe
To take it/ or to haue of hym routhe
In harmyng of my selfe/ or in repreue
Dearr it aperyl/ for hym that pe on leue

Tho Pandarus gan on her for to stare
And sayd/ no we is this the grettest wonder
That euer I sawe/ let be this nyce fare
To dethe mote I smytten be with thonder
If for the cytie/ whiche that stondeth yonder
Wolde I a lettre vnto you bring or take
To harm of you: what lyst you thus it make

But thus pe faren wel nyghe al and some
That he that most desyreth you to serue
Of hym pe retche lest/ where he become
And whether that he lyue/ or elles sterue
But for al that/ that euer I may deserue
Refuse it nat (q̃ he) and hente her faste
And in her bosome the lettre downe he thraste

And sayd her/ no we caste it away anon
That folke may sene/ & gauren on vs two
(Quod she) I can abyde tyl they be gon
And gan to smyle/ & sayd him/ eme I pray
Suche answere as you lyst your selfe purvey
For trewly I wol no lettre write
No than wol I (quod he) so pe endyte

Therwith she lough/ and sayd go we dyne
And he gan at him selfe rape faste
And sayd nece/ I haue so great a pyne
For lone/ that euerpche other day I faste
And gan his beste rapes fouthe to caste
And made her so to laugh at his folye
That she for laughter wende for to dye

And whan that she was comen in to the hall
Now we eme (q̃ she) we wol go dyne anon
And gan some of her women to her call
And streyght in to her chambre gan she gone
But of her besynesses this was one
Amonges other thynges/ out of drede
Ful prively this lettre for to rede

Aupsed worde by worde in euery lyne
And soulde no lacke/ she thought he coude his
And vp it put & went her in to dyne (goode
And Pandarus/ that in a studye stoode
Er he was ware/ she toke him by the hoode
And sayd/ ye were caught er that ye wyste
I vouchesafe (qd̄ he) do what pou lyste

Tho wysshen they/ and set hem downe & ete
And after noone ful slyghly Pandarus
Gan drawe him to ꝑ wyndowe nye the strete
And sayd nece/ who hath araped thus
The ponder house/ that stante aforene vs
Whiche house (qd̄ she) and gan for to beholde
And knewe it wel/ & whose it was him tolde

And fellen forthe in speche of thynges smale
And satten in the wyndowe bothe twey
Whan Pandarus sawe tyme vnto his tale
And sawe wel that her folke were al away
Nowe nece myn tel on (quod he) I pray
Howe lyketh pou the lettre that ye wote
Can he theron/ for by my trouthe I not

Therwith al rosy hewed tho woxe she
And gan to him/ and sayd/ so I trowe
Aquyte him wel for goddes loue (qd̄ he)
Why selfe to medes wol the lettre sowe
And helde his hondes vp/ and sate on knowe
Nowe good nece/ be it neuer so lyte
Yeue me the labour/ it to sowe and plyte

ye/ for I can so writen (quod she) tho
And ellis I not what I shulde to him say
Nay nece (qd̄ Pandare) say nat so
yet at the leste/ thonketh him I pray
Of his good wyl: O/ doth him nat to dey
Nowe for the loue of me my nece dere
Refuseth nat at this tyme my prayere

Depardieux (qd̄ she) god leue al be wele
God helpe me so/ this is the first lettre
That euer I wrote/ ye al or any dele
And in to a closet for to auyse her bettre
She went alone/ & gan her herte vnfettre
Out of disdaynes prison/ but a lyte
And set her downe/ & gan a lettre write

Of whiche to tell in shorte is myn entent
Thesercte/ as ferre as I can vnderstonde
She thonked him/ of al that he wel mene
To warden her/ but holden him in honde
She nolde nat ne make her selues bonde
In loue/ but as his suster him to plese
She wolde aye fayne/ to done his herte an ese

She shette it and to Pandare in to goth
There as he sate/ and loked in to strete
And downe she sette her by him on a stole
Of iaspre/ vpon a quysshen of golde ybete
And sayd/ As wisely helpe me god the grete
I neuer dyd a thyng with more payne
Than wrote this/ to whiche ye me constrayne

And tolde it him: He thonked her/ and sayde
God wote of thing ful often sothe begonne
Cometh ende good: and nere myne I reseyde
That ye to him of harde nowe ben ywonne
Ought he be glad/ by god & ponder sonne
For why/ men sayth impressions lyght
Ful lightly ben aye redy to the flyght

But ye han played the tyraunt al to longe
And harde was it your herte for to grave
Nowe feynte/ that ye no lenger on it honge
Al wolden ye the forme of daunger save
But hasteth you to done him ioye have
For trusteth wel/ to longe ydone hardnesse
Causeth despyte ful often for distresse

And right as they declared this matere
To Troylus/ right at the streetes ende
Came ryding with his tenthe some yfere
Al softely/ and thyder warde gan bende
There as thy sate/ as was his way to wende
To paleys warde/ and Pandare him aspyde
And sayd/ nece yfee who cometh here ryde

O/ flye nat in/ he sethe vs I suppose
Leste he may thynken that ye him eschue
Nay nay (qd̄ she) & woxe as rede as rose
With that he gan her humbly salue
With dredful chere/ and ofte his hewes mue
And vp his lobe debonairly he caste
And berked on Pandare/ & forthe by paste

God

God wot if she sate on his house aright
Or goodly was before that tyme day
God wote wher he were lyke a mery wyght
What shulde I dwelle/or tell of his aray
Creseyde/whanne that al these thynges sey
To tell in shorte/her lyked al yfere
His person/ his aray/ his lose/ his chere

His goodly maner/and his gentylesse
So wel/that nwer sythe that she was borne
Ne had she suche routhe of his distresse
And howe so/ she hath harde ben here beforne
To god hope I/she hath now caught a thorne
She shal nat pull it out this next wyse
God sende mo suche thornes on to pryse

Pandare/whiche that stode her fast by
Felte proyn hotte/and he began to smyte
And sayde/nece I pray you hertely
Telle me that I shal asken you a lyte
A woman ỹ were of his dethe to wyte
Withouten his gylt/ but for her sake of routh
Were it wel done (qõ she) nay by my trouthe

God helpe me so (qõ he) ye say me sothe
Ye seken wel your selfe that I naught lye
Lo/ ponde he rydeth (qõ she) ye so he dothe
Wel qõ Pandare/as I haue tolde you thne
Let be your nyce shame/and your folye
And speke with hym/in casyng of his herte
Let nyede nat do you bothe smerte

But therof was to heauey and to done
Consyderyng allthyng/ it may nat be
And whyt for shame/ it were ese to sone
To graunten hym so great a lyberte
For playnly her entent/as (sayd she)
Was for to loue hym vnwyst/ if she myghte
And guerdon hym with nothig but with sighte

But Pandare thought/ it shal nat be so
If that I may/this nyce opinyon
Shal nat ben holden fully yeres two
What shulde I make of this a longe sermon?
He muste assent on that conclusyon
As for the tyme/and whan that it was eue
And al was wel/he roste and toke his leue

And on his way faste homwarde he spedde
And right for ioy he felte his herte daunce
And Troylus he founde alone abedde
That lay/as doy these louers in a traunce
Betwixen hope and derke disesperaunce
But Pandare/right at his in comynge
He song/ as who sayth/so/ somwhat I bring

And sayd/who is in his bedde so sone
yburyed thus? it am I frende (quod he)
Who Troylus? nay/ helpe me so the moone
(Quod Pandarus) thou shalt vp ryse and se
A charme that was sent right nowe to the
The whiche can healen the of thyn axesse
If thou do forth with al thy besynesse

ye through the myght of god (qõ Troylus)
And Pandarus gan hym the lettre take
And sayd/parde god hath holpen vs
Haue here a syght/ and lose on al these blake
But ofte gan the herte glade and quake
Of Troylus/whyle he it gan to rede
So as the wordes yaue hym hope or drede

But fynally he tooke al for the beste
That she hym wrote/ for somwhat he beheelde
On whiche he thought he myght his hert reste
Al couered she the wordes vnder sheelde
Thus to the more worthy parte he helde
That what for hope/& Pandarus behestes
His great wo forzede he at the lestes

But as we maye al day our selues se
Through wood or roote the more fyre
Right so encreasse of hoope/of what it be
Therwith ful ofte encreaseth ese desyre
Or as an ese cometh of a fytel syre
So through this letter/whiche ỹ she hym sent
Encreasen gan desyre of whiche he brent

Wherfore I saye alway/that day and nyght
This Troylus gan to desyren/ more
Than he dyd erst through hope/& dyd his myght
To preyen on/as by Pandarus lore
And wryten to her of his sorowes sore
Fro day to day/ he lete it nought refreyde
That by Pãdare he somwhat wrote or seyde

And

And dyd also his other obseruaunces
That tyl a louer longeth in this caas
And after that his dyce turned on chaunces
So was he eyther glad/ or sayd alas
And helde after his gestes aye his paas
And after suche answere/ as he hadde
So were his dayes sory eyther gladde

But to Pandare alway was his recours
And pitously gan aye on him to playne
And him besought of rede/ and some socours
And Pandarus/ that sawe his wode payne
Weyt wel nygh deed for routhe/ sothe to sayne
And besyly with al his herte caste
Some of his wo to slen/ and that as faste

And sayd/ Lorde & frende/ and brother derr
God wote that thy disease dothe me wo
But wyst thou stynten al this wofull cherr
And by my trouthe/ er it be dayes two
And god toforne/ yet shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come in to a certayne place
Ther as yᵗ maist thy selfe prayen her of grace

And certaynly I not if thou it woste
But they that ben expert in loue/ it say
It is one of the thynges forthereth moste
A man to haue a leyser for to pray
And syker place/ his wo for to bewray
For in good herr it mote some routh impresse
To here and se the gyltlesse in distresse

Parauenture thinkest thou/ though it be so
That yonde wolde her don for to begynne
To haue a manr routhe vpon my wo
Sayth dauger nay/ thou shalt me neuer wyn
So ruleth her hertes goste within
That though she bende/ yet she stonte on rote
What in effecte is this vnto my bote

Thynke here aye/ whan that the sturdy oke
Of whiche men hackeths ofte for the nones
Kerued hath the happy fallyng stroke
The great sweyght dothe it come al at ones
As done these rotten/ or these myne stones
For swyfter course cometh thig yᵗ is of wight
Whan it descendeth/ than don thynges lyght

But rede that bote with bowe for euery flaste
Ful lightly cesse wynde/ it wol ceryse
Out of hys nat any ost/ whan it is caste
It nedeth me nought longe the forbyse
Wey shal troyen of a great empryse
Atcheued wel/ and stant withouten dout
Al haue men ben the lenger there about

But Troylus/ nowe tel me if the lest
A thyng/ whiche that I shal asken the
Whiche is thy brother/ that thou louest best?
As in thy very hertes pryuyte
Iwis my brother Deiphebus/ tho (qd he)
Nowe (qd Pandare) er houres twise twelue
He shal the case/ vnwyst of it him selue

Nowe lette me alone/ and worken as I may
(Quod he) and to Deiphebus went he tho
Whiche had his lorde/ & great frende ben aye
Sauf Troylus no man he loued so
To tel in shorte/ without wordes mo
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cause/ whiche that toucheth me

Yes parde (qd Deiphebus) wel thou woste
Al that euer I may/ and god to fore
Al were it but for the man I loue moste
Thy brother Troylus/ but say wherfore
It is/ for sythe the day that I was bore
I nas/ ne neuer mo to ben I thynke
Ayenst a thyng that might the forthynke

Pandare gan him thanke/ and to him seyde
Lo sir/ I haue a lady in this towne
That is my nece/ and called is Creseyde
Whiche some men wolde done oppresse/ youn
And wrongfully haue her possessyoun
Wherfore I of your lordshyp you beseche
To ben our frende/ withouten more speche

Deiphebus him answerde: O/ is not this
That thou spekest of to me thus straungely
Creseyde my frende? He sayd him yes
Than nedeth (qd Deiphebus) hardely
No more of thes to speke/ for trusteth wel yᵗ I
Wol be her champion with spore and yerde
I ne rought nat/ though al her foes it herde

But

But tell me how/for thou wost this matere
I myght best amayen/no we let se
(Quod Pandarus) if ye my soode so dere
Wolden as now me do that honour to me
To praye her to mor owe/so that she
Came vnto you/her playntes to deuyse
Her aduersaryes wolde of it agryse

And if I more durst pray as now
And chargen you to haue so great trauayle
To haue some of your brethern here with you
That mygtten to her counsel bet auayle
Than wote I wel she myght neuer fayle
For to ben holpen/what at your instaunce
What with her other frendes gouernaunce

Dryphebus/whiche that comen was of hyede
To al honour and bounte to conforte
Answerde/it shal be done: And I can fynde
yet greater helpe to this in myne entent
What wolden thou sayen/if for Helenyne I sent
To speke of this/I trow we it be the beste
For she may leden Parys as her leste

Of Hector/which that is my soode my brother
I ordeth nat to praye him frende to be
For I haue herde him/o tyme and eke other
Speken of Creseyde suche honour/that he
May sayne no bet/suche hap to hym hath she
I ordeth nat his helpes more craue
He shal be suche/right as we wol him haue

Speke thou thy selfe also to Troylus
Dy my behalfe/and pray him with be dyne
But/al this shal be done (quod Pandarus)
And take his leaue/and neuer gan to fyne
But to his neces house as streight as fyne
He came/and founde her fro the mete aryse
And set hem do wne/& spake right in this wyse

he sayd/O very god/so haue I ronne
Lo nece myn/se ye nat how I swete
I not where ye the more thanke me conne
De ye nat wene how false Polyphete
Ye go we alonde estsones for to plete
And bringe on pon aduocaryes at ones

Ano (quod she) and chaunged al her hewe
What is he more aboute me to dyspleye
And done me wronge/what shal I don/alas
yet of him selfe nothyng wolde I reche
Here it for Antenor and Eneas
That ben his frendes in suche maner cause
But for the loue of god/myn vncle dere
No force of that/let him haue al yfere

Withouten that/I haue ynough for be
Nay (qd Pandare) it shal nothyng be so
For I haue ben right now we at Dryphebus
At Hector/and myn other fordes mo
And shortly maked ech of hem his foe
That by my thryfte/he shal it neuer wynne
For aught he can/whan so that he begynne

And as they casten what was best to done
Dryphebus/of his owne curtesye
Came her to pray/in his propre persone
To holde him on the more we company
At dyner/whiche she nolde nat denye
But goodly gan to his prayere obey
Ht thonked her/and went vpon his wey

Whan this was done/this Pandare anon
To tel in shorte/& forthe he gan to wende
To Troylus/as stylle as any stone
And al this thyng he tolde him worde & ende
And how that he Dryphebus gan to blende
And sayd him/now is tyme if ye conne
To beare the wel to more we/& al is wonne

Now spede/now pray/now pitously complayn
Let nat for-yper shame/drede/or slouthe
Sometyme a man mote tel his owne payne
Delene it/and she wol haue on the routhe
Thou shalt ben saued by thy sayth my trouth
But wel wote I/thou now arte in a drede
And what it is/I say that I can arede

Thou thinkest now/how we shuld I don al this
For by my chere most ben espyed
That for her loue is/that I fare amys
Yet had I leuer bu wyst for sore we dye
Now we thynke nat so/for thou doest grete folye
For I right now haue fownden a maner
Of slyght/for to discryen al thy chere

Thou

Thou shalte goy ouernyght/ & that bylyne
Vnto Delphebus house/ as the to play
Thy maladye away the bet to dryue
For whiche thou semest sycke soth for to say
Done after that/ in thy bedde the lay
And say thou mayste no lenger vp endure
And lye right there/ and byde thyn auenture

Say that thy feuer is wonte the for to take
The same tyme/ and faste tyl a morowe
And let se nowe how wel thou canste it make
For parde sicke is he that is in sorowe
Go nowe farwel/ and Venus here to borowe
I hope and thou this purpose holde ferme
Thy grace she shal fully there conferme

(Quod Troylus) ywis thou nedelesse
Counsayleste me/ that sicklyche I me fayne
For I am sicke in ernest doutelesse
So that wel nyghe I sterue for the payne
(Od Pandarus) thou shalt the better playne
And haste the lasse nede to counterfete
For hym demeth men hote/ y seeth hem swete

Lo/ holde the at thy tryste close/ and I
Shal wel the deere vnto thy bowe dryue
Therwith he tolde his leaue al softely
And Troylus to paleys went blyue
So glad ne was he neuer in al his lyue
And to Pandarus rede gan al assent
And to Delphebus house at nyght he went

What nedeth it you to tellen al the chere?
That Delphebus vnto his brother made
Of his ayse/ or his sicklyche manere
How men gonne him with clothes for to lade
Whā he was layde/ & how mē wold him glade
But al for naught/ he helde forth aye the wise
That ye han herde Pandare er this deuyse

But certayne is/ er Troylus him leyde
Delphebus had prayde him ouernyght
To ben a frende/ and helpyng to Creseyde
God wote that he graunted anon right
To ben her ful frende with al his myght
But suche a rede was it to pray hym thenne
As for to bydde a woode man to renne

The morowe came/ & nerghen gan the tyme
Of mealtyde/ that the fayre queene Eleyne
Shope her to ben ay houre after the prime
With Delphebus/ to whom she wolde fayne
But as his fuster/ homely soothe to sayne
She came to dyner/ in her playne entente
But god & Pandare wyst al what this mente

Came eke Creseyde al innocent of this
Antygone her nece/ and Tarbe also
But fyre we nowe prolyxite best is
For loue of god/ and let vs faste go
Right to the effecte/ without en tales mo
Why al this folke assembled in this place
And let vs of her salutynges pace

Great honour dyd hem Delphebus certayne
And fedde hem wel/ with al that might lyke
But euermo alas/ was his restrayne
Wy good brother Troylus the syke
Lythe yet/ and ther withal he gan to syke
And after that he payned him to glade
Hem as he might/ and chere good he made

Complayned eke Eleyne of his sickenesse
So faythfully that it pyte was to here
And euery wight gan weyen for ayes
A leche anon/ and sayde in this manere
Wey curry folke/ this charme I wol the lere
But there sate one/ al lyste her nat to teche
That thought/ yet best couthe I hem his leche

After complaynt him gonnen they to preyse
As folke don yet whan sōe wight hath begon
To preyse a man/ and with pase him reyse
A thousande folde yet higher than the son
He is/ he can/ that se we lordes son
And Pandarus of that they wolde offerme
He nought forgate her praysyng to conferme

Herde al this thyng Creseyde wel ynough
And euery worde gan for to notifye
For whiche with sobre chere her herte lough
For who is that ne wolde her glouryse
To mowen suche a knyght drawe fyre or dyre
But al passe I/ lest ye to longe dwel
But for o tyme is al that euer I tel

Ik

The tyme came fro dyner for to ryse
And as they ought/arysen euerychone
And gonne a whyle of this and that deuyse
But Pandarus bisie al this speche anon
And sayd to Deiphebus/wol ye goon
Al youre wyll be/as I you prayde
To speken of the nedes of Creseyde

Helenus/whiche that by the honde her helde
Lete first the tale and sayd/go we blyue
And goodly on Creseyde she beheelde
And sayd/ Ioues let him neuer thryue
That doth you harme/& rewe hun sone of lyue
And yeue me sorow/but he shal it rue
If that I may/ and al folke be true

Tel thou thy neces ease (quod Deiphebus)
To Pandarus/for thou canste best it tell
Thy lordes and my ladyes/it stante thus
What shulde I lenger (qd he) do you dwell
He ronge hem out a proces lyke a bell
Upon her foe/that hyght Polyphete
So heynous/that men might on it spete

Answerde of this eche worse of hem thã other
And Polyphete they gonnen thus to warien
In honged be suche one/were he my brother
And so he shal/for it ne may nought tarien
What sholde I lenger in this tale tarien
Playnyche al at ones they her hyghten
To ben her frẽde/in al that euer they mighten

Spake than Helenus/and sayd Pandarus
Wolt aught my lord my brother of this mater
I meane Hector/or wote it Troylus
He sayd ye/but wol ye me nowe here
He thynketh thus/syth that Troylus is here
It were good/if that ye wolde assent
She tolde him her selfe al this er she went

For he wol haue the more her greef at herte
Bycause so/that she a lady is
And by youre wyf/ I wol but in right sterte
And do you wete/and that anon ywis
If that he slepe/or wol aught here of this
And in he lepte/and sayd hun in his eere
God haue thy soule/brought haue I thy beere

To smyleu of this gan tho Troylus
And Pandarus without tesenyng
Out went anon to Helenus and Deiphebus
And sayd hem/so there be no tarying
Ne more prease/he wol wel that ye bring
Creseyde my lady/that is here
And as he may endure/ he wol her here

But wel ye wote/the chambre is but lyte
And fewe folke may lightly make it warme
Nowe soberly ye/for I wol haue no wyte
To bring in prease/that might don hun harm
Or hun desease/for my better arme
Yet were it bet she bydde tyll eft soones
Nowe lete ye that knowen what to doone is

I say for me best is/as I can knowe
That no wight in ne wende/but ye twey
But it were I/for I can in a throwe
Reherse her ease/vnlyke that she can sey
And after this she may ones hun prey
To ben good lorde in shorte/& take her leue
This may nat mysel of his ese hun reue

And eke for she is straunge/he wol forbere
His ease/whiche that hun dare nat for pure
Eke other thyng that toucheth nat to her
He wol it tell/I wote it wel right nowe
That secrete is/and for the townes prowe
And they that knewe nothyng of his entent
Without more/to Troylus in they went

Helenus in al her goodly softe wyse
Gan hun salue/and womanly to play
And sayd iwys/ye mote asgate aryse
Nowe sayre brother be al hole I pray
And gan her arme right ouer his sholder lay
And him with al her wyt to recomforte
As she best coulde/she gan him to disporte

So after this (qd she) we you beseche
Thy dere brother Deiphebus and I
For loue of god/and so dothe Pandare eke
To ben good lorde & frende right hertely
Unto Creseyde/whiche that certaynly
Receyueth wronge/as wote wel here Pãdare
That can her ease wel bet than I declare

This

This Pandarus gan newe his longe assyle
And al her ease reherce/and that anon
Whan it was sayd/sone after in a whyle
(Quod Troylus) as sone as I may gone
I wol right sayne/with al my might ben one
Haue god my trouthe/her cause to sustene
Now good thrift haue ye(qd Helcyn ỹ quene)

(Quod Pandarus) and it pour wyl be
That she may take her leaue/er that she go
O/ els god forbyd it (tho quod he)
If that she vouchsafe for to do so
And with that worde (qd Troylus) ye two
Dephebus/and my suster lefe and dere
To you haue I to speke of a matere

To ben auysed by pourrede the better
And sounde (as hap was) at his beddes heed
The coppe of a tretyse/and a lettre
That Hector had him sent/to assey reed
If suche a man was worthy to ben deed
Wote I naught who/but in a grisly wyse
He prayde hem anon on it auyse

Dephebus gan this lettre for to vnfolde
In ernest great/ so dyd Helcyne the quene
And romyng outwarde/fast it gonne beholde
Downwarde a fleyre/in to an herber grene
This yllke thyng redden hem bytwene
And largely the mountenaūce of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to poure

Now let hem rede/and turne we anon
To Pandarus/that gan ful softe pue
That al was wel/and out he gan to gon
In to the great chambre/and that in hye
And sayd/ god saue al this companye
Come nere myn/my lady quene Helcyne
Abydeth you/and eke my lordes tweyne

Ryse/take with you your nece Antigone
Or whom you lyste/or no force hardely
The lasse prease the bet/come forthe with me
And lobe that ye thonken humbly
Hem al thre/and whan ye may goodly
Your tyme yse/taketh of hem your leue
Leste we to longe his restes him byreue

Al innocent of Pandarus entente
(Quod tho Creseyde) go we vncle dere
And arme in arme/inwarde wt hem she went
Auysyng wel her wordes and her there
And Pandarus/in ernestful manere
Sayd/ al folke for goddes loue I praye
Stynteth right here/and softely you playe

Auyseth you what folke ben here within
And in what plyte one is/god him amende
And inwarde thus ful softely begyn
Nece I conjure/and highly you defende
Oh his halfe/ whiche that soule be al sende
And in the vertue of couenantes twayne
Slee nat this man/ ỹ hath for you this payne

Eye on the dyuel/ thynke whiche one he is
And in what plyte he lythe/come of anon
Thynke al suche tarped tyde but lost it nys
That wol ye bothe sayne/whan ye ben one
Secondly/there yet deuyneth none
Vpon you two/come of nowe if ye conne
Whyle folke is blent/ lo/al the tyme is wonne

In tyterying and pursute/and delayes
The folke deuyne/at waggyng of a stree
And though ye wolde han after merp dayes
Than dare ye nat/and whyr for she and she
Spake suche a worde/thus loked he and he
Leste tyme be loste/I dare not with you dele
Come of therfore/and bringeth him to sele

But nowe to you/ye louers that ben here
Was Troylus nat in a caudedore
That lay/ȝ might the whelpinge of hem stere
And thought o lord/right now renneth my sore
Fully to dye/ or haue anon comforte
And was the first tyme he shulde her pray
Of loue/ O mighty god what shal he say.

Explicit liber secundus.

O Blyssful light/ of whiche ỹ bemes clere
Adorneth al the therde heuen fayre
O sonnes lefe/o Ioues doughter dere
Plesaunce of loue/ o goodly debonayre
In gentyl hertes aye redy to repayre
O very cause of heale and of gladnesse
Iheryed be thy might and thy goodnesse

In hewen and helle/ in erthe/ and salte see
In felde thy myght/ if that I wol disserve
To many/ derst/ fyrst/ herde/ and grene tree
The sete in tymes with vapour eterne
God iouith/ and to loue wol naught werne
And in this worlde no tymes creature
Withouten loue is worth/ or may endure

Ye Ioues first/ to thylke affectes glade
Thrugh whiche that thynges lyuen al/ ȝ be
Lowenden/ and amorous hem made
On mortal thyng/ and as you lyst ape pe
Yeue hem my loue/ ease/ or aduersyte
And in a thousande formes do hem fynde
Ioi loue in erthe/ ȝ whom you lyst he hente

Ye fates Wayte apeasen of his ire
And as you lyst/ ye maken hertes digne
Algates hem that pe wol set a fyre
They dreden shame/ and vyces they resigne
Ye don hem curteys be/ fressh/ and benigne
And hye or lowe/ after a wight entendeth
The ioyes that he hath/ your myght it sendeth

Ye holden regne and house in vnyte
Ye sothfast cause of frendshyp ben also
pe two wey al thilke conered qualyte
Of thinges/ whiche that folke wondren so
Whan they can nat construe how it may go
Why loueth him/ or why he loueth here
As why this fysshe ȝ nat that cometh to were

pe folke a lawe haue set in vniuerse
And this to wo I by hem that louers be
That who so stryueth with you hath ỹ werse
Now lady bright/ for thy benignyte
At reuerence of hem that seruen the
Whose clerke I am/ so techeth me deuyse
Some ioye of that is felt in thy seruyce

Yt/ in my naked herte sentement
Inhylde/ and do me shewe of thy swetnesse
Caliope/ thy vertue be now present
For now is nede/ ferst thou nat my distresse
How I mote tell vnwrought the gladnesse
Of Troylus/ to Venus heryinge
To whiche help nede hath/ god hem bring.

¶ Incipit liber tertius.

LAy al this meane whyle Troylus
Recordyng his lesson in this manere
Wayte thought he/ thus wol I say and thus
Thus wol I playne vnto my lady dere
That worde is good/ ȝ this shal be my chere
This nyst I nat sothely in no wyse
God leue him werken as he can deuyse

And forth so that his herte gan to quappe
Herying her come/ and shorte for to sybe
And Pandarus that sedde her by the lappe
Came nere/ and gan in at the curteyn pyke
And sayd/ god do bote on al sykē
Se who is here/ you comen to visyte
Lo/ here is she that is your dethe to wyte

Therwith it semed as he wepte almoste
Alas/ (quod Troylus) so routhfully
Where me be wo/ o mighty god thou woste
Who is al there/ I se nat tre why
Sir (quod Creseyde) it is Pandare and I
pe/ were herte alas/ I may nat ryse
To vncle/ and do you honour in some wyse

And dressed him vpwarde/ and she right tho
Gan bothe her hondes softe vpon him ley
O for the loue of god/ do pe nat so
To me (quod she) ey what is this to sey
Sir/ comen ay I to you for rauses twey
First you to thonke/ and of your lordshyp eke
Contynuaunce I wolde you beseke

This Troylus that herde his lady pray
Of lordshyp/ shuu woye neither quike ne dede
Ne myght o worde for shame to it say
Al though men shulden smyten of his heed
But forth so he woxe sodaynlyche reed
And for his lesson that he wende conne
To prayen her/ is thrugh his wyt yronne

Creseyde al this aspyed wel ynough
For she was wyse/ ȝ loued him neuer the lasse
Al were he in al aperte/ or made it tough
Or was to bolde/ to synge a foole a masse
But whan his shame gan somwhat to passe
His resons/ as I may my rymes holde
I wol you tell/ as techen bokes olde

In chaunged poynt/right for his very drede
Whiche poynt ete quode/& therto his mancre
Goodly abasshte/ and nowe his hewes rede
Nowe pale/vnto Creseyde his lady dere
With lose downe cast/& humble tvoldey chere
Lo/ the alderfirst worde that him astert
Was twyse/ mercy/ mercy swete hertete

And stynte a whyle/& whā he might out brig
The neyt worde way/god wote for I have
As sayth fully as I have had konnyng
Dey yours al/god so my soule save
And shal/tyl that I wofut wight be grave
And though I dare ne can vnto you playne
I wys I suffre nat the lasse payne

Thus moche as nowe/ah/ womanlyche wyfe
I may out bring/and if this you displese
That shal I wreke vpon myn owne lyfe
Right sone I trowe/ and do your herte an ese
If with my dethe/your herte may apese
But sens that ye han herde me som what sey
Nowe retche I neuer howe sone ꝑ I dey

Therwith his manly sorowe to beholde
It myght have made an hert of stone to rewe
And Pandare wept as he to water wolde
And poked euer his nece newe and newe
And sayd/wo begon bey hertes trewe
For loue of god/make of this thyng an ende
Or slee vs bothe at ones/er that ye wende

I/ what (qd̄ she) by god and by my trouthe
I not nat what ye wyne that I sey
Ey/what (qd̄ he) that ye have on him routhe
For goddes loue/ and dothe him nat to dey
Nowe than thus (qd̄ she) I wolde him prey
To tell me the fyne of his entente
per wyfte I neuer wel what that he mente

What that I meane/ O swete herte dere
(Quod Troylus) o goodly fresshe free
That with the stremes of your eyen clere
pe wolden somtyme frendly on me se
And than agreen that I may bey he
Without en braunche of vyce/on any wyse
In trouthe alway/to do you my seruyse

As to my lady right/and chefe reson
With al my wyte and al my dyligence
And to have right as you lyste comforte
Vnder your yerde egall to myn offence
As dethe/if that I breake your defence
And that ye deigne me so moche honour
Me to cōmaunden aught in any hour

And I to bey your bery humble trewe
Serrete/and in my paynes pacient
And euer to despeyn fresshly newe
To seruen/and to bey ape plese dylygent
And with good herte/al holy your talent
Receyuen wel/howe sore that me smerte
Lo/this meane I/ myn owne swete herte

(Quod Pandarus) lo here an harde requeste
And reasonable/a lady for to werne
Nowe nece myn/by Natall Jones ferst
Were I a god/ye shulde sterue as yerne
That herey wel this may wol nothyng yerne
But your honour/& sene him almost sterue
And bey so lothe to suffre him you to serue

With that she gan her eyen on him caste
Ful easely/and ful debonarily
Auysyng her/and hyrd nat to faste
With neuer a worde/but sayd him softely
Myn honour safe/ I wol wel trewly
And in suche sorme/as I can nowe devyse
Receyuen him fully to my seruyce

Beseching him for goddes loue/ that he
Wolde in honour of trouthe and gentylesse
As I wel meane/ ete meanen wel to me
And myn honour/ with wyt and besynesse
Aye kepe/and if I may done him gladnesse
From hence forthe/i wys I nyl nat sayne
Nowe bethe al hole/no lenger ye ne playne

But nathelesse/this werne I you (qd̄ she)
A lytel space although ye be ywis
Ye shal no more have soueraynte
Of me in soute/than right in that cas is
Ne nyl forbeare if that ye done amys
To wrathe you/and whyle that ye me serue
Thenysshen you/right after that ye deserue

And

And shortly dere herte/and al my fuyght
Both glad/and doth you to instyrasse
And I shal truely/with al my ful myght
your hyrter turnen al to swetenesse
If I be she/that may do you gladnesse
for euery wo ye shal recouer a blysse
and hem in armes tobe/and gan hym kysse

Ful Pandarus on knees/and vp his eyen
To heuen threwe/and helde his handes bye
Immortal god (qd he) that mayst not dyen
Lupide I mene/of this mayste glouyse
And Venus/ thou mayste makyn melodye
Withouten honde/me semeth that in towne
for this myracle pese here eche bell sowne

But ho/ no more nowe of this matere
for why? thus fastre wol comen vp anon
That haue the letter redde/so I hem here
But I conseyue the Leresyde/ and oute
And two/thou Troylus whā thou maist goon
That at myn house ye ben at my warnyng
for I ful wel shal shapen your cōmyng

And caseth there your herres right ynough
And let se whiche of you shal beare the belle
To speke of loue aryght/ and therwith he lough
for there haue I a leyser for to telle
(Quod Troylus) how we longe shal I dwelle
Er this be done? qd he/whan thou maist ryse
This thyng shal be right as you list deuyse

With that Helenus/and also Deiphebus
Tho comen vpward/right at the stayres ende
And sonne so tho gan gronen Troylus
his brother and his sustier for to blende
(Qd Pandarus) it tyme is that we wende
Take nere myn your leaue at al these
And let hem speake/ and cometh forthe with me

Ther toke her leaue at hem ful thriftely
As she wel couthe: and they her reuerence
Vnto the ful dyddeu hardely
And wonder wel spaken in her absence
Of her/ in praysyng of her excellence
her gouernaunce/her wyt/and her manere
Commendeden/that it ioye was to here

Nowe let her wende vnto her owne place
And turne we to Troylus agayne
That gan ful lightly of the lettre pace
That Deiphebus had in the gardyn feyne
And of Helenus and him he wolde feyne
Desyered hem/and sayd that him leste
To slepe/and after tales haue a reste

Helenus him kyssed/and toke her leue blyue
Deiphebus eke/and home wente euery wight
And Pandarus/as faste as he may dryue
To Troylus tho came/as fyne ryght
And on a paillet/al that gladde nyght
By Troylus he lay/with merry chere
To tale/ z wel was hem they were yfere

Whan euery wight was voyded/but they two
And al the doors weren faste yshette
To tel in shorte/without wordes mo
This Pandarus/without any lette
Vp rose/and on his beddes syde him sette
And gan to speken in a sobre wyse
To Troylus/as I shal you deuyse

Myn alderleueste lorde/and brother dere
God wot z thou/that it sate me so sore
Whan I the sawe so langupssshyng to here
for loue of which thy wo woxe alway more
That I with al my myght/and al my lore
Haue euer sythen done my besynesse
To bringe the to ioye out of distresse

And haue it brought to such plyte as ye woste
So ? though me thou stondest nowe in wayt
To fare wel/I say it for no boste
And woste thou why/but shame it is to say
for the haue I begon a gamen play
Whiche that I neuer done shal este for other
Al tho he were a thousāde folde my brother

That is to say/for the am I becomen
Desyrynge game and ernest/suche a mene
As maken women vnto men to comen
Al say I nat/ thou woste wel what I mene
for the haue I my nece/of yeres clene
So fully made thy gentylesse tryst
That al shal ben/ right as thy selfe lyst

But god/ that al wotteth take I to wytnesse
That neuer I this for coueytyse wrought
But onely for to abredge that distresse
For whiche wel nye thou dydest/ as me thought
But good brother/ do nowe as the ought
For goddes loue/ and kepe her out of blame
Sens thou artte wyse/ & saue alway her name

For wel thou woste/ the name as yet of her
Amõges ỹ people/ as (who sayth) halowed is
For that may is vnbore I dare wel swere
That euer wyste that she dyd amys
But wo is me/ that I that cause al this
Way thynken that she is my nece derre
And I her eme/ and traytour eke yfere

And were it wyste that I through myn engyn
Had in myn nece pput this fantasye
To done thy lust/ and holly to be thyn
Why: al the worlde wolde vpon it crye
And say/ that I the worste trecherye
Dyd in this case/ that euer was begonne
And she fordone/ & thou right naught ywõne

Wherfore er I wol ferther gone or paas
Yet este I the beseche/ and fully say
That priuyte go with vs in this caas
That is to sayne/ that thou vs neuer wray
And be nat wrothe/ though I the oste pray
To holden secre suche an hygh matere
For skylful is (thou woste wel) my prayere

And thynke/ what wo there hath betyd er this
For makyng of auauntes/ as men rede
And what myschaunce in this worlde yet is
Fro day to day/ right for that wicked dede
For whiche these wyse clerkes that ben dede
Haue euer this prouerbed to vs ponge
That the first vertue is to kepe the tonge

And nere it that I wylne as nowe abredge
Diffusyon of speche/ I coulde almost
A thousande olde stories the aledge
Of women loste/ through false & fooles boste
Prouerbes canste thy selfe pnowe/ & woste
Ayenst that vyce for to ben a blabbe
Al sayd men sothe/ as often as they gabbe

O tonge alas/ so often here befalle
Haste thou made many a lady bright of hewe
Sayd/ wela way the day that I was borne
And many a maydens sorowe for to newe
And for the more parte al is vntrewe
That men of pelye/ & it were brought to preue
Of synde/ none auauntour is to leue

Auauntour and a lyer/ al is one
As thus. I pose a woman graunt me
Her loue/ and sayth that other wol she none
And I am swore to holden it secre
And after I tel it two or thre
Iwys I am auauntour at the leest
And lyer eke/ for I breke my beheest

Nowe loke than/ if they be nat to blame
Such maner folke/ what shal I clepe hē what
That hem auaunte of women/ and by name
That yet behyght hem neuer this ne that
Nesno we hem more than myn olde hat
No wonder is/ so god me sende heele
Though women deden with vs myn to dele

I say nat this for no mistrust of you
Ne for no wyse men/ but for fooles nyce
And for the harme that in the worlde is nowe
As wel for folye oste/ as for malyce
For wel wote I/ in wyse folke that lyce
No woman dredeth/ if she be wel auysed
For wyse ben by fooles harme chastysed

But nowe to purpose/ lene brother derre
Haue al this thing that I haue said in mynde
And kepe the close/ and be nowe of good chere
For al thy dayes thou shalt me trewe fynde
I shal thy processe set in suche a kynde
And god to forne/ that it shal the suffyse
For it shal be/ right as thou wolte deuyse

For wel I wote/ thou meanest wel parde
Therfore I dare this fully vndertake
Thou woste eke/ what thy lady graunted the
And day is set the chartres to make
Haue nowe good nyght/ I may no leger wake
And byd for me/ syth thou arte nowe in blysse
That god the sende bothe/ or soone lysse

Who might tellen halfe the ioye at firſt
Whiche that the ſoule of Troylus tho felte
Herynge the effect of Pandarus beſeche
His olde wo/that made his herte ſwelte
Gan tho for ioye waſten/and to melte
And al the rychelle of his ſpyghes ſore
At ones fledde/he felte of hem no more

But right ſo as theſe holtes/and theſe hayes
That han in wynter deed ben and doue
Reueſten hem in grene/whan that May is
Whan euery luſty lyſteth to play
Right in that ſelfe wyſe/ſothe to ſay
Ioye ſodaynly his herte ful of ioye
That gladder was there neuer man in Troye

And gan his hoſte on Pandarus vp caſte
Ful ſoberly/and ſtedely on to ſe
And ſayd/frende/in Apulle the laſte
As wel thou woſte/if it remembre the
Howe nyghe the dethe for wo thau ſounde me
And howe thou dyddeſt al thy buſynelſe
To vnowe of me the cauſe of my diſtreſſe

Thou woſte howe longe I it forbare to ſay
To the/that arte the may that I beſt tryſt
And perylle none was it to the to bewray
That wyſt I wel: but tel me if the lyſte
Sythe I ſo lothe was/that thy ſelfe it wyſte
Howe durſte I mo tellen of this matere?
That quake nowe/& no wight may be here

But natheleſſe/by that god I the ſwere
That as hym lyſt may al this world gouerne
And if I lye/Achylles with his ſpere
Myn herte cleaue/al were my lyfe eterne
As I any mortal/if I late or yerne
Wolde it bewray/or durſt/or ſhulde conne
For al the good that god made vnder ſonne

That rather dye I wolde/and determyne
As thynketh me nowe/ſtorkerd in priſon
In wretchednelſe/in ſylthe/and in vermyne
Laptyſe to cruell kyng Agamenon
And this in al the temples of this towne
Vpon the goddes al/I wol the ſwere
To morowe day/if that the lyſteth here

And that thou haſte ſo moche ydon for me
That I ne may it neuer more deſerue
This vnowe I wel/al myght I nowe for the
A thouſande tymes on a morowe ſterue
I can no more/but that I wol the ſerue
Right as thy ſlaue/whyther ſo thou wende
For euer more/vnto my lyues ende

But here with al myn herte I the beſeche
That neuer on me thou deme ſuche folye
As I ſhal ſayne/me thought vp thy ſpeche
That this whiche thou me doeſt for copanye
I ſhulde wene it were a baudrye
I am nat woode/al if I ſeude be
It is nat ſo/that wot I wel parde

But he that gothe for golde/or for rycheſſe
On ſuche meſſages/call him what ye lyſte
And this that thou doeſt/cal it gentyleſſe
Compaſſyon/and felawſhyp/and tryſt
Departe it ſo/for wyde where is wyſte
Howe that there is dyuerſyte required
Betwixen thynges lyke/as I haue lered

And that thou knowe I thinke nat ne wene
That this ſeruyce a ſhame be or rape
I haue my fayre ſuſter Polyxene
Caſſandre/Helayne/or any of the frape
Be ſhe neuer ſo fayre/or wel yſhape
Tel me/whiche thou wylte of euerychone
To haue for thyne/and let me than alone

But ſyth that thou haſte done me this ſeruyce
Vp lyfe to ſauue/and for non hope of mede
So for the loue of god/this great empriſe
Parfourme it out/nowe is the moſte nede
For hyghe and lowe/withouten any drede
I wol alway thyn heſtes al kepe
Haue nowe good nyght/& let vs bothe ſlepe

Thus helde hem eche of other wel apayde
That al the worlde ne might it bet amende
And on the morowe whan they were arayde
Eche to his owne neders gan entende
But Troylus/though as the fyre he brende
For ſharpe deſyre of hope/and of pleſaunce
He nat forgate his good gouernaunce

But in him selfe/ with mãhode gan restreyne
Eche rakel dede/and eche vnbridled chere
That al that lyuen sothe to sayne
Ne shulde haue wyst/by worde or by manere
What that he mente/as touchyng that matere
From euery wight/as ferre as is the cloude
He was so wyse/and wel dissymulen coulde

And al the whyle whiche that I nowe deuyse
This was his lyfe/with al his ful myght
By day he was in Martes hygh seruyce
That is to sayne/in armes as a knyght
And for the more parte the longe nyght
He lay and thought howe that he might serue
His lady best/her thanke for to deserue

Nyl I nat sweare/al though he lay softe
That in his thought he nas somwhat disesed
Ne that he turned on his pilowes ofte
And wolde of that him missed haue ben eased
But in suche case/men be nat alway pleased
For naught I wot/no more than was he
That can I deme of possibylyte

But certayne is/to purpose for to go
That in this whyle/as written is in geste
He sawe his lady somtyme/and also
She with him spake/ whan ỳ she durst a leste
And by her bothe auyse/as was the beste
Apoyntreden ful warely in this nede
So as they durste/howe they wolde procede

But it was spoken in so shorte a wyse
In suche a wayte alway/and in suche fere
Leste any wight deuynen or deuyse
Wolde of hem two/or to it lay an ere
That al this worlde so lese to hem ne were
As that Cupide wolde hem grace sende
To maken of her speche right an ende

But thylke lytel that they spake or wrought
His wyse goste toke aye/ of al suche hede
It semed her he wyste what she thought
Withouten worde/so that it was no nede
To bydde him aught to don/or aught forbede
For whiche she thought ỳ soue/al come it late
Of al ioye/ had opened her the gate

And shortly of this processe for to pace
So wel his werde and wordes he desette
That he so ful stode in his ladye grace
Twenty thousande tymes er she lette
She thonked god she euer with him mette
So couthe he him gouerne in suche seruyce
That al the worlde ne might it bet deuyse

For she founde him so discrete in all
So secrete/ and of suche obeysaunce
That wel she felte he was to her a wall
Of stiele/and shelde of euery displesaunce
That to ben in his good gouernaunce
So wyse he was/she was nomore afered
I meane as ferre as ought ben requyred

And Pandarus to quicke al way the fyre
Was euer pryse prest and dylygent
To ease his frende was set al his desyre
He shoue aye on/ he to and fro was sent
He letters bare whan Troylus was absent
That neuer may/as in his frendes nede
Ne bare him bet than he/withouten drede

But nowe paraunture som mã wayten wolde
That euery worde or sonde/loke or chere
Of Troylus/that I reherren shulde
In al this whyle/vnto his lady dere
I trowe it were a longe thyng for to here
Or of what wight ỳ stante in suche disioynte
His wordes al/or euery loke to poynte

For sothe I haue nat herde it done er this
In storie none/ne no may here I wene
And though I wolde/I couthe nat ywis
For there was some cpystel hem betwene
That wold(as saith myn auctour)wel cõtene
Nye halfe this boke/of which hi lyst nat write
Howe shulde I than a lyne of it endyte

But to the great effecte/than say I thus
That stondyng in concorde and in quyete
This ylke two/Creseyde and Troylus
As I haue tolde/and in this tyme swete
Saue onely often might they nat mete
Ne leyser haue/her speches to fulfell
That it befyl/ right as I shal you tell

That

That Pandarus/that euer dyd his myght
Right for the fyne that I shal spelle of here
Is for to hungery to his house some wyght
His sayne nece/and Troylus yfere
Where as at leyser al this hygh matere
Touchyng her loue/were at ȳ ful vp bounde
Had out of doute a tyme to it founde

For he with great delyberation
Had euery thyng that therto might anaple
Some caste/and put in execution
And neyther lefte for coste ne for trauayle
Come it hem lyste/ hem shulde nothyng fayle
And for to bey in aught aspyed there
That wyste he wel an impossyble were

Dredelesse it clere was in the wynde
Of euery pye/and euery let game
Lowe al is wel/for al the worlde is blynde
In this mater/bothe stemed and tame
This tymber is al redy vp to frame
Ne lacketh naught/ but that we weten wolde
A certayne houre/ in whiche she comen shulde

And Troylus/that al this purueyaunce
Knewe at the full/and wayted on it aye
And here vpon eke made great ordynaunce
And founde his cause/ȝ ther with his araye
If that he were myssed nyght or daye
Where whyle he was about this seruyce
That he was gone to done his sacrifyce

And musyng at suche a temple alone waste
Answered of Apollo for to be
And first to fene the holy laurer quaste
Er that Apollo spake out of the tree
To tell him next whan grekes shulde flye
And for thy let him no man/god forbede
But pray Apollo helpe in this nede

Lowe is there lytel more for to done
But Pandare vp/and shortly for to sayne
Right sone vpon the chaungyng of the moone
Whan lightlesse is ȳ world a nyght or twayne
And that the welken shope him for to rayne
He stroyght a mans way vnto his nece wente
Ye haue wel herde the fyne of his entente

Whan he was comen/he gan anon to playe
As he was wonte/and of him selfe to rape
And fynally he swore/and gan her say
By thys and that/she shulde him nat escape
No lenger done him after her to cape
But certainly/she muste by her leue
Lchim soupen in his house with him at eue

At whiche she lough/ȝ gan her first excuse
And sayd: it rayneth: lo/ howe shulde I gone
Let be (qd he) ne stonde nat thus to muse
This mote be done/ ye shal come there anone
Do at the lasie/ herof they fell at one
Or els faste he swore her in her eere
He nolde neuer comen there she were

Sone after this/she to him gan rowne
And asked him if Troylus were there
He swore her nay/for he was out of towne
And sayd/ nece: I pose that he were there
You durste neuer haue the more feere
For rather than men might him there aspye
We were leuer a thousandefolde to dye

Naught lyst myn auctour fully to declare
What that she thought/ whan he sayd so
That Troylus was out of towne yfare
And if he sayd therof sothe or no
But that withouten awayte with him to go
She graunted him/sythe he her that besought
And as his nece obeyed as her ought

But nathelesse/yet gan she him beseche
(Al though with him to gone it was no feere)
For to beware of gosyp/she peoples speche
That diemen thynges/which that neuer were
And wel auyse him whom he brought there
And sayd him eme/sens I muste on you tryst
Lose al be wel/and do nowe as you lyst

He swore her this/by stockes and by stones
And by the goddes that in heuen dwell
Or els were him leauer soule and bones
With Pluto dyng/ as depe ben in hell
As Tantalus/what shulde I more tell
Whan al was wel/she rose and toke his leue
And she to souper came whan it was eue

With

With a certayne of her owne men
And with her fayre neece Antigone
And other of her women nyne or ten
But who was glad nowe/who as trowe ye?
But Troylus/that stode and myght it se
Throughout a lytel wyndowe in a stewe
There he beshet/sith mydnyght was in mewe

Unwyst of euery wight/but of Pandare
But to the poynt/nowe whan ỳ she was cõe
With al ioye/and al frendes fare
Her eme anone in armes hath her nome
And than to the supper al and some
Whan tyme was/ful softe they hem sette
God wote there was no deynte ferre to fette

And after supper gonnen they to ryse
At ease wel/with hert fresshe and glade
And wel was him that coude best deuyse
To lyken her/or that her laughen made
He songe/she playde/he tolde a tale of Wade
But at the laste/as euery thyng hath ende
She toke her leaue/and nedes wolde wende

But o fortune/executrice of wyerdes
O influentes of these heuens hye
Sothe is/that vnder god ye ben our hierdes
Though to vs beestes/ben the causes wise
This mene I nowe/for she gan homward hye
But execute was al besyde her leue
At the goddes wyl/for whiche she muste bleue

The bente moone with her hornes pale
Saturnus and Joue/in Cancro ioyned were
That suche a rayne from heuen gan auale
That euery maner woman that was there
Had of that smoky rayne a very feere
At whiche Pandare tho lough/and sayd thenne
Nowe were it tyme a lady to gon hennе

But good neece/if I might euer please
you any thyng/than pray I you (quod he)
To don myn herte as nowe so great an ease
As for to dwell here al this nyght with me
For why: this is your owne house parde
For by my trouthe/I say it nat in game
To wende as nowe/it were to me a shame

Crisеyde/whiche that coulde as moche good
As halfe a worlde/toke hede of his prayere
And sens it rayned/and el was in a stode
She thought/as good chepe may I dwell here
And graunt it gladly with a frendes chere
And haue a thonke/as grutche and than abyde
For home to gone it may nat wel betyde

I wot (quod she) myn vncle liefe and dere
Sens that you lyst/it shall be so
I am right glad with you to dwellen here
I sayd but agame I wolde go
Wys graunt mercy neece (quod he) tho
Were it a game or no/sothe to tell
Nowe am I glad/sens that you lyste to dwell

Thus al is wel/but tho began aright
The newe ioye/and al the firste agayne
But pandarus/if goodly had he myght
He wolde haue hyed her to bedde fayne
And sayd/lorde this is an huge rayne
This were a wether for to slepen in
And that I rede vs soone to begyn

And neece/wote ye where I wol you lay?
For that we shul nat syggen ferre a sonder
And for ye nyther shullen/dare I say
Here noyse of rayne/ne of thonder
By god right in my closet ponder
And I wol in that vtter house alone
Den wardayne of your women euerychone

And in this myddel chambre that ye se
Shal your women slepen/wel and softe
And there I sayd/shal your seluen be
And if ye syggen wel to nyght/come ofte
And careth nat what wether is a lofte
The wyne anon/and whan so you leste
Go we to slepe/I trowe it be the beste

There nys no more/but here after sone
They voyde/dronke/and trauers dra we anon
Gan euery wight that had nought to done
Out in the place/out of the chambre gon
And euermore so fiersly pyssh it rone
And blewe therwith so wonderlyche loude
That wel nyghe no man herde other coude

The

Tho Pandarus her eme/right as him ought
With women/ ſuche as were her moſt aboute
Ful glad vnto her bedden ſyde her brought
And toke his leaue/and gan ful lowe loute
And ſayd/here at this cloſet doore without
Right ouerthwarte your women lyggen all
That whom you lyſt of hem/ye may ſone cal

So whan that ſhe was in the cloſet layde
And al her women faſt by ordynaunce
A bedde were/there as I haue ſayde
There nas no more to ſtrippen nor to praunce
But boden go to bedde with miſchaunce
If any wyght ſterynge were any where
And let hem ſlepen/that a bedde were

But Pandarus/ þ wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce/and curry poynte therin
Whan that he ſawe that al thyng was wele
He thought he wolde vpon his werke begyn
And gan the fyrſte doore al ſofte vnpyn
As ſtyll as ſtone/without lenger lette
Vp Troylus ado wirright he him ſette

And ſhortly to the poynte right for to gon
Of al this werke he tolde him worde & ende
And ſayd/make the redy right anon
For thou ſhalt in to heuen vlyſſe wende
Nowe blyſſful Venus/ thou me grace ſende
(Quod Troylus) for neuer yet no dede
Had I ne nowe/ ne halfendele the drede

(Quod Pandarus) ne drede the neuer adele
For it ſhal be right as thou wolte deſyre
So thinne I/this nyght ſhal I make it wele
Or caſten al the gruell in the fyre
yet blyſful Venus/this nyght thou me enſpyre
(Quod Troylus) as wys as I the ſerue
And euer bet and bet ſhal tyl I ſterue

And if I had/O Venus ful of myrthe
Aſpectes badde of Mars/or of Saturne
Or thou combuſte/ or let were in my byrthe
Thy father pray/ al thyſſe harme diſturne
Of grace/and that I glad agen may turne
For ſone of him thou louedeſt in the ſhawe
Imeane Adon/that with þ bore was ſlawe

Ioue eke/for the loue of fayre Europe
The which in ſoume of a bulle away thou ſet
Nowe helpe/O Mars/thou w[t] thy blody cope
For loue of Cypria/thou me naught ne let
O Phebus/thilke whā Daphne her ſeluen ſhet
Vnder the barke/and Lauret wexe for drede
Yet for her loue/o helpe nowe at this nede

Mercurye/for the loue of her eke
For which Pallas was w[t] Aglauros wrothe
Nowe helpe/and eke Dyane I the beſeke
That this vyage be nat to the lothe
O fatall ſyſtren/ whiche or any clothe
Ye ſhapen was/ my deſtyne me ſponne
So helpeth to this werke that is begonn

(Quod Pandarus)thou wretched mouces herte
Arte thou agaſt ſo that ſhe wol the byte
Why/do on this furred cloke vpon thy ſherte
And ſolowe me/ for I wol haue the wyte
But byde/and let me gon before alyte
And with that he gan vndone a trappe
And Troylus he brought in by the lappe

The fierne wynde ſo loude gan to route
That no wight other noyſe might here
And they that layen at the doore without
Ful ſykerly they ſlepten al yfere
And Pandarus/ with ful ſobre chere
Gothe to the doore anon withouten lette
There as they lape/and ſoftely at ſhette

And as he came agen warde prunckly
His neece awoke/ & aſketh/ who gothe there?
Why derre neece (quod he) it am I
Ne wondreth nat/ne haue of it no feere
And neere he came/and ſayd her in her eere
No worde for loue of god I pou beſeche
Let no wight aryſe/& herein of our ſpeche

What/ whiche way be ye comen? benedycite/
(Quod ſhe) and howe vnwyſt of hem all
Here at this ſecret trappe doore (quod he)
(Quod tho Creſeyde) let me ſome wight call
Eygh/ god forbyd that it ſhulde ſo fall
(Quod Pandarus) that ye ſuche folyſ wrought
They might demen thig they neuer er thought

It is

It is nat good a slepyng hounde to wake
Ne yeue a wight a cause for to deuyne
your women slepen al/ I vnderstande
So that for hem the house men might myne
And slepen wollen tyl the sonne shyne
And whan my tale is brought to an ende
Vnwyst right as I came/ so wol I wende

Nowe nece myne/ ye shul wel vnderstonde
(Quod he) so as ye women demen all
That for to holde in loue a man in honde
And hym her lese and dere herte call
And make hym an howue aboue a call
I meane/ as loue an other in this mene while
She dothe her selfe a shame/ and hym a gyle

Nowe wherby that I tell you al this
ye wote your selfe/ as wel as any wight
Howe that your loue al fully graunted is
To Troylus/ the worthyest wight
One of the worlde/ and therto trouth ypligh̄t
That but it were on hym alonge/ ye nolde
Hym neuer falsen/ whyle ye lyuen sholde

Nowe stonte it thus/ that syth I fro you went
This Troylus/ right platly for to seyne
Is through a gutter by a priuy went
In to my chambre come in al this reyne
Vnwyste of euery maner wight certeyne
Saue of my selfe/ as wisely haue I ioye
And by the fayth I owe Priam of Troye

And he is come in suche payne and distresse
That but he be al fully woode by this
He sodaynly mote fall in to woodnesse
But if god helpe: and cause why is this
He sayth hym tolde is of a frende of his
How ỹ ye shulde louen one/ that hight Horaste
For sorow of which this night shal be his laste

Creseyde/ whiche that al this wonder herde
Gan sodainly aboute her herte colde
And with a syghe she sorowfully answerde
Alas/ I wende who so tales tolde
Myn dere herte wolde me nat holde
So lightly faulse/ alas conceytes wronge
What harme they don: for now lyue I to longe

Horaste alas/ and falsen Troylus
I knowe hym nat/ god helpe me so (qd she)
Alas what wicked spyrite tolde hym this
Nowe certes eme/ to moche we and I hym se
I shal therof as full excusen me
As euer dyde woman/ if hym lyste
And with that worde she gan ful sore syke

O god (quod she) so worldly selynesse
Whiche clerkes callen false felicite
ymedled is with many a bytternesse
Ful angwyshous/ than is god wot (qd she)
Condycion of veyne prosperite
For either ioyes comen nat yfere
Or elis no wight hath hem alway here

O brotyl wele of mannes ioye vnstable
with what wight so thou be/ or howe thou play
Either he wot/ that thou ioye arte mutable
Or wote it nat/ it mote ben one of tway
Nowe if he wote it nat/ howe may he say
That he hath very ioye and felynesse
That is of ignoraunce ape in derkenesse

Nowe if he wote that ioy is transytorie
As euery ioye of worldly thing mote flye
Than euery tyme/ he that hath in memorye
The drede of lesyng/ maketh hym/ that he
May in no parfyte sykernesse be
And if to lese his ioye/ he set a myte
Than semeth it/ that ioye is worthe ful lyte

Wherfore I wol diffyne in this matere
That treuly for aught I can espye
There is no very wele in this worlde here
But o thou wicked serpent Ialousye
Thou mysbyleued/ and enuyous folye
Why hastie thou Troylus made to me entryst
That neuer yet agylte/ that I wyste

(Quod Pandarus) thus falsely is this caas
Why vncle myn (qd she) who tolde hym this
Why dothe my dere herte thus/ alas?
ye wote/ ye nece myn (quod he) what is
I hope al shal be wel/ that is amys
For ye may quenche al this/ if that you lyste
And dothe right so/ I holde it for the beste

To

So shal I do to kepe me/ pleis (quod she)
And god to some/ so that it shal suffyse:
To morowe alas/ that were sayne (qõ he)
Nay nay/ it may nat stonden in this wyse
For nece myne/ thes wisten clerkes wyse
That peryl is with dretchyng in delawe
Nay/ suche abodes be nat worthe an hawe

Nece/ al thyng hath tyme I dare auowe
For whan a chambre a fyre is/ or an hal
Wel more nede is/ it sodaynly reskowe
Than to disputen and asken amonges al
Howe the candel in the strawe is fal
Ah benedicite/ for al among that fare
The harme is dont/ and farwel sely fare

And nece myne/ me take it nat a greue
If that ye suffre hem al nyght in this wo
God helpe me so/ ye had hem neuer leue
That dare I sayne/ nowe there is but we two
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do
Ye ben to wyse to done so great folye
To putte his lyfe al nyght in ieopardye

Had I hem neuer lefe: by god I wene
Ye had neuer thyng so lefe (quod she)
Nowe by my thrifte (quod he) it shal be sene
For sithe ye make this ensample of me
If me al nyght wolde hem in sorowe se
For al the treasour in the towne of Troy
I bidde god/ I neuer mote haue ioye

Nowe loke than/ if ye that ben his loue
Shulde putte his lyfe al nyght in ieopardye
For thyng of nought/ nowe by the god above
Nat onely this delay cometh of folye
But of malyce/ if that I shulde nat lye
Wha/ plainly and ye suffre hem in dystresse
Ye neyther bounte done ne gentylesse

(Quod tho Creseyde) wol ye done o thyng
And ye therwith shal stynte al his disease
Haue here and bere him this blewe ryng
For there is nothyng might him better plese
Saue I my selfe/ ne more his herte apese
And say my dere herte/ that his sorowe
Is causeles/ that shal be sene to morowe

A ryngne (qõ he) ye haselwodes shaken
Ye nece myne/ the ryngne must haue a stone
That might deed men alyue maken
And suche a ryngne trowe I that ye haue none
Discrecion out of your herd is gone
That fele I nowe (qõ he) and that is routhe
O tyme ylost/ wel mayst thou curse slouthe

Wote ye nat well that noble ne hye corage
Ne sorowyth nat/ ne stynteth ese for lyte
But if a sely were in a ialous rage
I nolde setten at his sorowe a myte
But sese him with a fewe wordes whyte
Any other day/ whan that I might him synde
But this thyng stant al in another kynde

This is so gentyl and so tendre of herte
That with his deth he wol his sorowes wreke
For trust wel/ howe sore that him smerte
He wol to you no ialous wordes speke
And for thy nece/ er that his herte breke
So speke your selfe to him of this matere
For with a worde ye may his herte stere

Nowe haue I tolde what peryll he is in
And his comyng vnwyst is to euery wight
Ne parde harme may there be none/ ne syn
I wol my selfe be with you al this nyght
Ye knowe eke howe it is your owne knyght
And that by right/ ye muste vpon him tryste
And I al prest to fetche him whan you lyste

This accident so pytous was to here
And eke so lyke a sothe/ at prime face
And Troylus her knyght/ to her so dere
His prime cõming/ and the speker place
That though she dyd him as than a grace
Confyded all thynges as they stoode
No wonder is/ sens he dyd al for goode

Creseyde answerde/ as wisely god at reste
My soule bynge/ as me is for him wo
And eme iwys/ sayne wolde I done the beste
If that I a grace had for to do so
But whether that ye dwell/ or for him go
I am/ tyl god me bettre mynde sende
At Dulcarnon/ right at my wyttes ende

Quod

(Quod Pandarus) ye nece wol ye here
Dulcarnon is called flemyng of wretches
It semeth harde/for wretches wol naught lere
For very slouthe/or other wylful tetches
This is said by hem/ þ be nat worthe two fetches
But ye ben wyse/ & that ye han on hode
Nys neyther harde/ne sl̄pysul to withstonde

Than eme (q̄d she) dothe here of as you lyst
Byt er he come/ I wol vp first aryse
And for the loue of god/sens al my tryst
Is on you two/and ye bethe bothe wyse
So werketh nowe/ in so discrete a wyse
That I honour may haue/and he plesaunce
For I am here/al in your gouernaunce

That is wel sayd (q̄d he) my nece dere
Here good thryfte on that wyse gentyl herte
But lyggeth styll/ & taketh hym right here
It nedeth nat no ferther for hym sterte
And eche of you caseth other sorowes smerte
For loue of god/ and Venus I the herye
For sone hope I/ that we shal ben merye

This Troylus ful sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrely/right by her beddes heed
And in his beste wyse his lady grette
But lorde so she woxe sodaynlyche reed
Ne though men shulde smyten of her heed
She coulde nat o worde aright out bringe
So sodaynly for his sodayne comynge

But Pandarus/that so wel coulde sele
In euery thyng/to play anon began
And sayd/ nece/ se howe this lorde can knele
Nowe for your trouthe/ se this gentyl man
And with that worde/he for a quysshen ran
And sayd/kneleth nowe whyle þ you leste
Here god your hertes bring sone at reste

Can I naught sayn/for she bad him nat tyse
If sorowe it put out of her remembraunce
Or els that she toke it in the wyse
Of duetie/as for his obseruaunce
But wel synde I/she dyd him this plesaunce
That she him kyst/al though she syked sore
And bade him sytte adowne withouten more

(Quod Pandarus) nowe wol ye wel begyn
Nowe dothe hym sytte/ good nece dere
Vpon your beddes syde/al there within
That eche of you the bet may other here
And with that worde he drewe him to the syde
And took a tyght/ & fonde his countenaunce
As for to loke vpon an olde romaunce

Creseyde that was Troylus lady right
And clere stode in a grounde of sykernesse
Al thought she her seruaunt & her knyght
Ne shulde non vntrouthe in her gesse
That nathelesse/consydred his distresse
And that loue is in cause of suche solye
Thus to him spake she of his ialousye

Lo herte myne/as wolde the excellence
Of loue/ ayenst the whiche that no man may
Ne ought eke goodly mas̄en resystence
And eke bycause I seke wel and saye
your great trouthe and seruyce euery day
And þ your hert al myne was/ sothe to sayne
This drout me for to rewe vpon your payne

And your goodnes haue I sondry alway yet
Of whiche my dere hert/ and al my knyght
I thanke it you/ as ferre as I haue wyt
Al can I nat as moche as it were right
And I emforth my cōnyng and my myght
Haue/ and aye shal/ howe sore that me smert
Den to you trewe and hole with al myn hert

And dredelesse that shal be founden at preue
But herte myne/ what al this is to sayne
Shal wel be tolde/ so þ ye nought you greue
Though I to you right on yo' selfe cōplayne
For there with meane I finally payne
That haste your hert and myne in hevynesse
Fully to slayne/ and euery wronge redresse

Dy good myne/ not I/ for why ne howe
That vtterly alas/ that wicked wyurre
Thus causeles is cropen in to you
The harme of which I wolde sayne dyspuyte
Alas/ that he al hole or of him styrte
Shulde haue his refute in so digne a place
That Ioue/ him soone out of your hert rase

But

But o thou/o auctour of nature
Is this an honour to thy deyte
That folke dwelly suffre here aunture
And who that gylty is/al quyte gothe he
O were it lefull for to playne of the
That vndeserued suffrest ialousye
O that I wolde vpon the playne and crye

Ese al my wo is this/that folke now vse
To sayne right thus: ye/ialousye is loue
And wolde a vnyuersell of venym al excuse
For that a grayne of loue is on it shoue
Out thou wote wyght Ioue that sytte aboue
If it be lyker loue/hate/or graue
And after that it ought beare his name

But certayne is/some manner ialousye
Is excusable/more than some twyse
As whan cause is/and some suche fantasye
With pyte so wel coupressed is
That it vnneth doothe or sayth amys
But goodly dumbeth vp al his destresse
And that excuse I for the gentillesse

And some so ful of furye is/and dispyte
That it surmounteth his reprissyon
But herte myne/ye be nat in that plyte
That thonke I god/for whiche your passyon
I wol nat call it but illusyon
Of habundaunce of loue/and beny cure
That doothe your herte this disese endure

Of whiche I am sory/but nat wrothe
But for my dewoire and your hertes reste
Where so you lyst/by ordal or by othe
By sorte/or by what wyse so you leste
For loue of god/let preue it for the beste
And if that I be guilty/do me dey
Alas/what ought I mair bene or sey

With that a fewe sighte teres newe
Out of her eyen fell/and thus she seyde
Now god yᵗ wiste/in thought ne dede vntrewe
To Troylus was neuer yet Creseyde
With that her hed do wne in the bed she leyde
And with the shete it wrighe/i syghed sore
And held her peace/nat a word spake she more

But now we helpe god/to quenche al this sorwe
So hope I that he shal/for he best may
For I haue sene of a ful misty morowe
Folowen ful ofte a mery somers day
And after wynter foloweth grene May
Ney sene alday/and reden eye in floures
That after sharpe shoures ben dutoures

This Troylus/whan he her wordes herde
Haue ye no care/him lyste nat to slepe
For it thought him no strokes of a perde
To here or se Creseyde his lady wepe
But wel he felte aboute his herte crepe
For euery teare whiche that Creseyde asterte
The crampe of deth/to straine him by ỹ herte

And in his mynde he gan the tyme acurse
That he came there/and that he was borne
For now is wicke turned in to worse
And al that labour he hath done beforne
He wende it lofte/he thought he nas but lorne
O Pandarus thought he/alas thy wyle
Serueth of naught/so wela way the whyle

And ther withal he hynge adowne his heed
And fell on knees/and soroufully he syght
What might he sayne? he felte he nas but deed
For wothe was she ỹ shuld his sorowes light
Out natheles/whan that he speken might
Than said he thus/god wot that of this game
Whan al is wyste/than am I nat to blame

Therwith the sorowe of his herte shette
That from his eyen fyl there nat a terre
And euery spyrit his vygour in knette
So they astouyed or oppressed were
The felyng of sorowe/or of his feere
Or of aught els/fledde were out of towne
Adowne he syl al sodaynly in swoune

This was no lytel sorowe for to se
But al was hushte/ s Pandare vp as faste
O nece peace/or we be lorne (quod he)
Bethe nat agaste/but certayne at laste
For this or that/he in to bedde hym caste
And sayd/ O theefe/is this a manners herte
And of he rente al to his bare sherte

And sayd nece/but ye helpe vs nowe
Alas/your owne Troylus is lorne
Iwys so wolde I/and I wyste howe
Ful sayne (qd̄ she) alas that I was borne
pe nece/wol ye pulley out the thorne
That stycketh in his herte (quod Pandare)
Say al forgeue/and stryue as al this fare

ye that to me (qd̄ she) ful leuer were
Than al the good the sonne auoute gothe
And there withal she swore hym in his eere
Iwys my dere herte I am nat wrothe
Haue here my trouthe/& many an other othe
Nowe speke to me/for it am I Cresyde
Out al for naught/yet might he nat abreyde

Therwith his ponce/& paumes of his hondes
They gan to frote/& wete his temples twayne
And to delyuer hym fro bytter bondes
She ofte hym kyssed/and shortly for to sayne
Hym to rewaken she dyd al her payne
And at the laste he gan his brethe to drawe
And of his swough sone after that adawe

And gan bet mynde/and reason to hym take
But wonder sore he was abasshed pwis
And with a syghe whan he gan bet awake
He sayd/O mercy god/what thyng is this?
Why do ye with your seluen thus amys?
(Quod tho Cresyde) is this a mans game
What Troylus/wol ye do thus for shame?

And therwithal her arme ouer hym she layde
And al forgaue/and ofte tyme hym keste
He thonked her/and to her spake and sayde
As fyll to purpose/for his hertes reste
And she to that answerde hym as her leste
And with her goodly wordes hym disporte
She gan/and ofte his sorowes to comforte

(Quod Pandarus) for aught I can aspyen
This lyght nor I ne seruen here of naught
Lyght is nat good for syche folkes eyen
But for the loue of god/sens ye ben brought
In thus good plyte/let nowe non heuy thought
Ben hangyng in the hertes of you twey
And bare the candell to the chymney

Soone after this/ though it no nede were
Whan she suche othes as her lyst deuyse
Had of hym take/her thought tho no lenger
Ne cause ete none/to byd hym therof ryse
yet lesse thyng than othes may suffyse
In many a rase/for euery wight I gesse
That loueth wel/meaneth but gentylesse

But in effecte she wolde wete anoy
Of what may/and ete where/and why
He ialous was/sens there was cause noy
And ete the signe that he tolde it by
She bade hym that to tell her besily
Or els certayne she bare hym oy houde
That this was done of malyce her to fonde

Withouten more/shortly for to sayne
He must obey vnto his ladyes herst
And for the lasse harme he must sayne
He sayd her/whan she was at suche a ferst
She might oy hym haue losed at the lerst
Wot I nat what/al dere ynough a ryssche
As he that nedes must a cause fynde

And she answerde/swete/ al were it so
What harme was yt/ sens I none yuel meane
For by that god that bought vs bothe two
In al thyng is myne entent clene
Suche argumentes ne be nat worthe a bene
Wol ye the chydynge ielous countrefete
Nowe were it worthy that ye were ybete

Tho Troylus gan sorowfully to syke
Lest she be wroth/hym thought his hert deyde
And sayd/alas/vpon my sorowes syke
Haue mercy swete herte myne Cresyde
And if that in the wordes that I seyde
Be any wronge/ I wol no more trespace
Doth what you lyst/I am al in your grace

And she answerde/of gylte myscreorde
That is to sayne/ that I forgeue al this
And euermore on this nyght you recorde
And bethe wel ware ye do nomore amys
Nay dere herte myn (qd̄ he) pwis
And nowe (qd̄ she) that I haue you do smarte
Forgeue it me/myn owne swete herte

This Troylus with blysse of that suppused
Put al in goddes handē/as he that mighte
Nothyng but wel/and sodaunly auysed
He her in armes fast to him hente
And Pandarus/with a ful good entente
Layde him to slepe/and sayd/if pe be wyse
Dcurueth nat no we/leste more folde aryse

What might or may the sely larke say
Whan that ϸ sperhauke hath him in his fote?
I can no more/but of these ylke tway
To whom this tale sugre be or soote
Though I tarye a yere/ somtyme I mote
After myn auctour tellen her gladnesse
As wel as I haue tolde her heuynesse

Creseyde/ whiche that felte her thus ytake
(As mutry derkes in her bokes olde)
Right as an aspen leefe she gan to quake
Whan she him felte her in his armes folde
But Troylus al hole of cares colde
Gan thanken tho the blysful goddes seuen
Through sodue paynes to him solde to heuen

This Troylus in armes gan her straine
And sayd swete/as euer mote I goone
Now we be ye caught/here is but we twayne
Now pelcth you/for other boote is none
To that Creseyde answerde thus anone
Ne had I er no we/my swete herte dere
Ben polde twyes/I were no we nat here

O/sothe is sayd/that healed for to be
As of a seuer/or other great sikenesse
Ben nede dronken/as we ofte se
Ful bytter dunke/and for to haue gladnesse
Ben dunken ofte payne/and great distresse
I meane it here by/as for this auenture
That through a payn hath founden al his cure

And now we swetnesse semeth more swete
That bytternesse assayed was byfome
For out of wo in blysse now we flete
Non suche they seken sins they were bome
Now is this bet/than bothe two be lome
For lone of god/take euery woman hede
To werken thus/if it come to the nede

Creseyde al quyte from euery drede and tene
As she that wiste cause had him to tryste
Made him suche feest/it ioye was to sene
Whan she his trouthe & clene entent wyste
And as about a tree with many a twyste
Dytrent and wythe the swete wodbynde
Lay eche of hem in armes other wynde

And as the newe abassed nightyngale
That stynteth first/whan she begynneth synge
Whan that she herth any heerdes tale
Dim the hedges any wight sterynge
And after syker dothe her voyce out rynge
Right so Creseyde/whan her drede slente
Opened her herte/& tolde him her entent

And right as he that seeth his dethe ypshapen
And dyen mote/in aught that he may gesse
And sodaunly refrous dothe him escapen
And from his dethe is brought in sykernesse
For al this worlde/in suche present gladnesse
Was Troylus/and hath his lady swete
With worse happe god let vs neuer mete

Her armes small/ her streyght backe & softe
Her sydes longe/ flesshly/smothe/and white
He gan to stroke/& good thrifte bade ful ofte
Her snowysse throte/ her brestes rounde & lyte
Thus in this heuen he gan him to delyte
And therwithal a thousande tymes her kyste
That what to done for ioye vnneth he wyste

Than sayd he thus/O loue/o charyte
Thy mother eke/Citherea the swete
That after thy selfe/next heryed be she
Venus I meane/ the wel willy planete
And next that/ Imeneus I the grete
For neuer may was to you goddes holde
As I/ whiche ye haue brought fro cares colde

Benigne loue/thou holy bonde of thynges
Who so wol grace/& lyste the nat honouren
Lo/his desyre wol flye withouten wynges
For nosdest thou of bountie hem socouren
That seruen best/and most al way labouren
yet were al lost/that dare I wel sayne certes
Dut if thy grace passed our desertes

And for thou me that left thõbe coude deserue
Of hem that nombred ben vnto thy grace
Hast holpen/ there I lykely was to sterue
And me bestowed in so highe a place
That thylke boundes may no blysse pace
I can no more/ but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bounte and thyne excellence

And therwithal Creseyde anon he kyst
Of whiche certayne she felte no disease
And thus sayd he/ nowe wolde god I wyst
Wyne herte swete/ howe I you myght please
What may (qõ he) was euer thus at ease
As I: on whiche the fayrest/and the best
That euer I sey/ deyneth her to rest

Here may men sene that mercy passeth right
The experience of that is felte in me
That am vnworthy to so swete a wight
But hertes myne/ of your benygnite
So thynke/ that though I vnworthy be
yet mote I nede amenden in some wyse
Right through the vertue of your hye seruyce

And for the loue of god my lady dere
Sith he hath wrought me for I shal you serue
As thus I meane: Wol ye be my frere
To do me lyue/ if that you lyst/ or sterue
So teacheth me/ howe that I may deserue
Your thonke/ so ỹ I through myn ignoraũce
Ne do nothyng that you be displesaunce

For certes fresshe womanlyche wyse
This dare I say/ that trouthe and dyligence
That shal ye synden in me al my lyse
Ne I wol nat certayne bresten your defence
And if I do/ present or in absence
For loue of god/let slee me with the dede
If that it sykē vnto your womanhede

I wys(qõ she) myn owne hertes lust
My grounde of ease/and al myn herte dere
Graunt mercy/ for on that is al my trust
But let vs fall away fro this matere
For it suffyseth/this that sayd is here
And at o worde/withouten repentaunce
Welcome my knight/my peace/my suffysaũce

Of her delyte or ioyes/one of the leste
Were impossyble to my wyt to say
But ganeth ye/that haue ben at the feste
Of suche gladnesse/if that hem lyst play
I can no more/but thus these ylke tway
That nyght/betwixen drede and sykernesse
Felten in loue the great worthynesse

O blyssful nyght/of hem so longe ysought
Howe blythe vnto hem bothe two thou were?
Why ne had I such ferst wt my soule ybought?
ye/ or the leste ioye that was there
Away thou foule daunger and thou fere
And let hem in this heuen blysse dwell
That is so hygh/that al ne can I tell

But sothe is/though I can nat tellen all
As can myn auctour of his excellence
yet haue I sayd/and god to forme shall
In euery thyng al holy his sentence
And if that I/at loues reuerence
Haue any worde in ecthed for the beste
Dothe therwithal right as your seluen leste

For my wordes here/ and euery parte
I speke hem al vnder correction
Of you that felyng haue in loues arte
And put it al in your discretion
To entreate or make dimynution
Of my langage/and that I you beseche
But now to purpose of my rather speche

These ylke two that bethe in armes laste
So lothe to hem a sonder gon it were
That eche from other wenden ben vnsaste
Or elles lo/this was her mosie fere
That al this thyng but vyce dreames were
For whiche ful oft eche of hem sayd/o swete
Clyppe I you thus/or elles do I it mete

And lorde so he gan goodly on her se
That neuer his loke ne bleynte from her sete
And sayd/o dere herte may it be
That it be sothe/that ye ben in this place
ye herte myne/ god thanke I of his grace
(Qõ tho Creseyde) & therwithal hym kyste
That where her spyryte was/ for ioy she wyste

This Troylus ful ofte her eyen two
Gan for to dyffe/and sayde: O eyen clere
Je werre ye that wrought me suche wo
Je sumwhile nettes of my lady dere
Though there be merry wantey in your chere
God wote the treyte ful harde is for to fynde
How coude ye/ withouten bonde me bynde

Therwith he gan her faste in armes take
And wel an hundred tymes gan he syke
Lat suche forsounfull syghes as men make
For wo/or ese whan that folke be syke
But esy syghes/suche as ben to lyke
That shewed his affection withinne
Of suche syghes coulde he nat blynne

Sone after this/they spake of sondrie thinges
As fyl to purpose of this auenture
And playeing/entrechaungeden her rynges
Of whiche I can nat tellen no scripture
But wel I wot/a brooche of golde and asure
In whiche a rubye set was lyke an herte
Creseyde hym gaue/& stacke it on his sherte

Lorde trowe ye that a coueytous wrytche
That blameth loue/and halte of it dispyte
That of tho pens that he can mucche & stetche
Was euer yet penye to hym suche delyte
As is in loue/in o poynt in some plyte
Nay doutlesse/for also god me saue
So parfyte ioye may no nygarde haue

They wol say yes/but lorde so they lye
Tho bely wrytches ful of wo and drede
That callen loue a woodnesse of folye
But it shal fall hem/as I shal you rede
They shal forgon the whyte & eke the rede
And lyue in wo/ther god yeue hem mischaunce
And euery louer in his trouthe auaunce

As wolde god tho wrytches/that despyse
Beautee of loue/and cares also longe
As had Medea/ful of curtesye
And therto dronken had as hotte & stronge
As Creseus dyd/for his aduertes wronge
To teachen hem/that they ben in the vyce
And louers nat/al though they holde hem nice

These ylke two/of whom I you say
Whan that her hertes wel assured were
Tho gonnen they to speke and to play
And eke rehercen howe/whan/and where
They fyrste knewe first/& euery wo or feere
That passed was/but al suche heuynesse
Ithonke it god/was turned to gladnesse

And euer more/whan that hem fyl to speke
Of any thing of suche a tyme agon
With kyssyng al that tale shulde breke
And fallen in to a newe ioye anone
And dryuen al her might/ sens they were one
For to recouere blysse/and ben at ese
And papsed wo with ioye countrepese

Reason wol nat that I speke of sclepe
For it acordeth nat to my matere
God wote they toke of it ful lytell kepe
But lesse this nyght that was to hem so dere
Ne shulde in Cayne escape in no manere
It was byset in ioye and besynesse
Of al that sowneth in to gentylnesse

But whan the cocke/cõmune astrologer
Gan on his breste to beate/and after crowe
And Lucifer/the dayes messanger
Gan for to ryse/and out her beames throwe
And erst warde rose/ to hym ỹ coulde it knowe
Fortunes maiden/that anon Creseyde
With herte sore/to Troylus thus seyde

Myne hertes lyfe/my trust/al my plesaunce
That I was borne alas / that me is wo
That day of bs mote make disseueraunce
For tyme it is to ryse/and hence go
Or ells I am lost for euer mo
O nyght alas/why nylt thou ouer bs hous
As longe as whan Alcmena lay by Ioue

O blacke nyght/as folke in bokes rede
That shapen arte by god/this worlde to hyde
At certayne tymes/with thy derke wede
That vnder that men might in reste abyde
Wel oughten bestes to playn/& folke to chyde
That ther as day with labour wolde bs breste
That thou thus flyest/& depriest bs nat reste

Thou doeſt alas/ to ſhortely thyne offyce
Tho taſte nyght/ there god maker of kynde
The for thyne haſte/ and thyne vnkynde vice
So faſte aye to our hemyſphery kynde
That neuermore vnder ỹ ground thou wynde
For nowe for thou ſo hyeſt out of Troye
Haue I forgone thus haſtely my ioye

This Troylus/ that with tho wordes felte
As thought hym tho/ for pytous diſtreſſe
The bloody teares from his herte melte
As he that yet neuer ſuche heyneſſe
Aſſayed had/ out of ſo great gladneſſe
Gan ther withal Creſeyde his lady dere
In armes ſtrayne/ & holde in louely manere

O cruel day/ accuſer of the ioye
That night & loue haue ſtole/ & faſte ywriен
Acurſed be thy cõmyng in to Troye
For euery bore hath one of thy bright eyen
Enuyous day/ what lyſt the ſo to ſpyen
what haſt thou loſt/ why ſekeſt thou this place
There god thy light ſo quenche for his grace

Alas/ what haue theſe louers the agylt?
Diſpytous day/ thyn be the payne of hell
For many a louer haſte thou ſlayne/ & wylt
Thy pornge in wol nowhere let hem dwell
What profreſt thou thy light here for to ſell?
Go ſell it hem that ſmale ſtales graue
Me wol the nat/ vs nedeth no day haue

And eke the ſonne Tytan gan he chyde
And ſayd/ O foole/ wel may men the diſpyſe
That haſte al night the dawnyng by thy ſyde
And ſuffreſt her ſo ſoone vp fro the ryſe
For to diſeaſe vs louers in this wyſe
What holde your bed/ ther thou & thy morowe
I bydde god ſo yeue you bothe ſorowe

Therwith ful ſore he ſyghed/ & thus he ſeyde
Fy lady right/ and of my wele or wo
The well and roote/ o goodly myn Creſeyde
And ſhal I ryſe alas/ and ſhal I ſo?
Nowe fele I that myn herte mote a two
And howe ſhulde I my ſyſe an houre laue
Sens that with you is al the lyſe I haue?

What ſhal I done? for certes I not howe
Ne whan alas/ I ſhal the tyme ſe
That in this plyte I may ben eſe with you
And of my lyfe god wote howe ſhal that be
Sens that deſpyte right nowe ſo byteth me
That I am dere anoy/ but I retourne
Howe ſhulde I long alas/ fro you ſoiourne?

But natheleſſe/ myn owne lady bright
Were it ſo that I wyſte certely
That your humble ſeruaunt/ & your knyght
Were in your herte pfet ſo fermely
As ye in myn/ the whiche trewly
The leaſt were than theſe woldes tweyne
Yet ſhulde I bet endure al my payne

To that Creſeyde anſwerde right anoy
And with a ſyghe ſhe ſayd/ O herte dere
The game ywys ſo ferforthe nowe is goy
That firſt ſhal Phebus fallen fro the ſphere
And euery ſtone of Troye ſhal to-ſtere
Er Troylus go out of Creſeydes herte

pe ben ſo depe within myn herte graue
That tho I wolde it turne out of my thought
As wiſely ben god my ſoule ſaue
To dyen in the payne/ I couſde nought
And for ỹ loue of god/ that vs hath wrought
Let in your brayne none other fantaſye
No crepe/ that it cauſe me to dye

And that ye me wolde haue as faſt in mynde
As I haue you/ that wolde I you beſeche
And if I wyſte ſothly that to fynde
God might nat a poynte my ioyes eche
But herte myn/ withouten more ſpeche
Bethe to me trewe/ or elſe were it rouche
For I am thyn/ by god and by my trouthe

Beth glad for thy/ and lyue in ſykernesſe
Thus ſayd I neuer er this/ ne ſhal to mo
And if to you it were a great gladneſſe
To turne ayen ſone after that ye go
As ſayne wolde I as ye/ it were ſo
As wiſely god myn herte bring to reſte
And hyn in armes toke/ and ofte keſte

Ayenſt

Arrist his wyll/ sythe it mote nedes be
Thus Troylus vp rose/and sadly hym dredde
And in his armes toke his lady swete
Ay kissyng tymes/and oft his way hym spedde
And with suche wordes/ as his hert bledde
He sayd: swetewel my derre herte swete
That god be graunt sounde & sone to mete

To whiche no worde for sorowe she answerde
So sore gan his partyng her destrayne
And Troylus vnto his paleys ferde
As wo bygon as she was/ sothe to sayne
So harde hym wroge of sharpe desire ỳ payn
For to ben eftsones there he was in plesaunce
That it may neuer out of his remembraunce

Retourned to his royal paleys sone
He softe vnto his bedde gan for to swynke
To slepe longe/as he was wonte to done
But al for nought/ he may wel lygge & wynke
Nor slepe may there non in his herte synke
Thynkyng how she/ for whom desyre hym bredde
A thousande folde was worth more thā he wold

And in his thought/ gan vp & down to wynde
Her wordes al/and euery countenaunce
And fermely impressen in his mynde
The laste poynte/ that to hym was plesaunce
And verely of thylke remembraunce
Desyre al newe hym bredde/and lust to brede
Gan more than erst/ & yet toke he none hede

Creseyde also/right in the same wyse
Of Troylus gan in her herte shette
His worthynesse/his lust/ his dedes wyse
His gentylnesse/and how she with hym mette
Thonkyng loue/he so wel her bysette
Desyryng ofte to haue her herte dere
In suche a place as she durst make hym chere

Pandare a morowe/whiche that cōmen was
Vnto his nece/and gan her fayre grete
And sayd/ Al this nyght so rayned it alas
That al my drede is/that ye nece swete
Haue thynke lepser had to slepe and mete
If this nyght (qᵭ he) hath rayn so do me wake
That some of vs I trowe her herdes ake

And nere he came & sayd/ how we stante al nowe
This mery morowe/nece how we can ye fare
Creseyde answerde/neuer the bet for you
Fope that ye ben/god yeue your herte care
God helpe me so/ye caused al this fare
I trowe I (qᵭ she) for al your wordes whyte
O who so seeth you/knoweth you ful lyte

With that she gan her face for to wrie
With the shete/and wope for shame al reed
And Pandarus gan vnder for to prie
And sayd nece/if that I shal ben deed
Haue here a swerde/and smyteth of my heed
With that his armes/al sodaynly he thruste
Vnder her necke/and at the laste her kyste

I passe al ỳ/whiche chargeth naught to say
What/ god forgaue hire dethe/and she also
Forgaue: and with her vncle gan to play
For other cause was there none than so
Out of this thyng right to theffecte to go
Whan tyme was/ home to her house she went
And Pandare hath fully his entent

Now we tourne we ayen to Troylus
That restelesse ful longe a bedde lay
And pryuely sente after Pandarus
To hym to come in al the hast he may
He come anone/ nat ones sayde he nay
And Troylus ful soberly he grette
And down vpon the bedde syde hym sette

This Troylus with al thaffectioun
Of frendly soure/ that hert may deuyse
To Pandarus on knees fyl adowne
And er that he wolde of the place aryse
He gan hym thanken on his best wyse
An hundred tyme he gan the tyme blesse
That he was borne/ to bring hym to swych esse

He sayd/ O frende of frendes/the alderbest
That euer was/ the sothe for to tel
Thou hast in hevyn ybrought my sowle at rest
Fro Pleyegeton the fyre floode of hel
That though I might a thousande tymes sel
Vpon a day my lyfe in thy seruyse
It myght nat a moote in that suffyse

The

The ſonne/ whiche that al the worlde may ſe
Sawe neuer yet my lyfe/ that dare I ley
So ioly/ fayre/ and goodly/ as is ſhe
Whoſe I am al/ and ſhal tyl that I dey
And that I thus am hers/ dare I ſey
That thanked be the hygh worthyneſſe
Of loue/ and eke thy ẽynde beſyneſſe

Thus haſte thou me no lytel thyng ipeue
For why to the obliged be for aye
(Wy lyfe/ & why? for through thyn helpe I lyue
Or els deed had I ben ago many a day
And with that worde down in his bed he lay
And Pandarus ful ſoberly hun herde
Tyl al was ſayd / and than he hun anſwerde

(Wy dere frende/ if I haue done for the
In any caſe/ god wote it is me leſe
And am as glad as man may of it be
God helpe me ſo/ but take no we nat agreſe
That I ſhal ſayne/ beware of this miſchefe
That there as no we brought art to thy bliſſe
That thou thy ſelfe/ ne cauſe it nat to myſſe

For of fortunes ſharpe aduerſyte
The worſte ẽynde of infortune is this
A man to haue ben in proſperyte
And it remembre/ whan it paſſed is
Thou art wyſe ynough/ for thy do nat amys
Be nat to raſell/ though thou ſytte warme
For if thou be/ certayne it wol the harme

Thou art at eſe/ and holde the wel therin
For alſo ſure as redde is euery fyre
As great a craſte is to kepe wel as wynne
Vnder al way wel thy ſpeche and thy deſyre
For worldely ioye holdeth nat but by a wyre
That breketh wel/ it breſt alday ſo ofte
For thy nede is to werken with it ſofte

(Quod Troylus) I hope/ and god to ſome
(Wy dere frende/ that I ſhal ſo me beere
That in my gylte there ſhal no thing ben lorn
Ne I nyl nat raſle/ as for to greuen here
It nedeth nat this mater ofte tere
For wyſteſt thou myn herte wel Pandare
God wote of this thou woldeſt lyte care

Tho gan he tel him of his glad night
And whatof firſt his herte dradde/ and howe
And ſayd frende/ as I am trewe knyght
And by that fayth I owe to god and you
I had it neuer halfe ſo hote as nowe
And aye the more that deſyre me byteth
To loue her beſt/ the more it me delyteth

I not my ſelfe nat wiſely/ what it is
But nowe I fele a newe qualyte
Pe al another than I dyd er this
Pandare anſwerde and ſayd thus/ that he
That ones may in heuen blyſſe be
He feleth other wayes dare I lay
Than thilke tyme he firſt herde of it ſay

This is a worde for al/ that Troylus
Was neuer ful to ſpeke of this matere
And for to prayſen vnto Pandarus
The bounte of his right lady dere
And Pandarus to thanke / and maken chere
This tale was aye ſpan newe to begynne
Tyl that the nyght departed hem a twynne

Soone after this/ for that fortune it wolde
Ieomen was the blyſſful tyme ſwete
That Troylus was warned/ that he ſholde
There he was erſt/ Creſeyde his lady mete
For whiche he ſette his hert in ioye ſlete
And faithfully gan al the goddes herye
And lette ſe nowe/ if that he can be merye

And holden was the forme/ and al the gyſe
Of her cõmynge/ and of his alſo
As it was erſt/ whiche nedeth naught deuyſe
But playnly to theffecte right for to go
In ioye and ſurete Pandarus hem two
Abedde brought/ whan hem bothe leſt
And thus they ben in quete and in reſt

Naught nedeth it to you/ ſithe they ben mate
To aſke at me/ if that they blythe were
For if it erſt was wel/ tho was it bette
A thouſande folde/ this nedeth nat enquere
A go was euery ſorowe and euery fere
And bothe y'wis they had/ and ſo they wende
As moche ioye as herte maye comprehende

This

This nyce no lytel thyng of for to sey
This passeth euery wyt for to deuyse.
For ese of hem gan others lyste obey
Iesperte/whiche that these clerkes wyse
Comenden so/we may nat here suffyse
This ioye may nat ywritten be with pene
This passeth al that herte may bethynke

But atte day/so welaway the stounde
Gan for to aproche/as they vp sprongen thenne
For whiche hem thought felen dethes wounde
So wo was hem/that shaungen gan her hewe
And day they gonnen to despyse al newe
Lasselyng it traytour/enuyous and worse
And bytterly the dayes lyght they corse

(Quod Troylus) alas/nowe am I ware
That Pryous/and tho swyfte stedes thre
Whiche that draweth forthe the sonnes chare
Han goy some sygnethe in despyte of me
And maketh it so sone day to be
And for the sonne hym hasteth thus to ryse
Se shal I neuer don hym sacrifyse

But nedes day departe hem muste sone
And whan her speche don was/and her there
They twyn anon/as they were wont to done
Ful setten tyme of metyng eft yfere
And many a night they wrought in this maner
And thus fortune a tyme sadde ne lope
Creseyde/and eke thes lynges sone of Trope

In suffysaunce/in blysse/and in syngynges
This Troylus gan al his lyfe to lede
He spendeth/inserth/and maketh festynges
He yeueth frely ofte/and chaungeth wede
He helde about hym alway out of drede
A worlde of folke/as come hym wel of lynde
The stresseste/and the best he couthe synde

That suche a noyse was of hem/and a stevene
Throughout the worlde/of honour and largesse
Thath vp ronge vnto the pate of heuen
And as in loue he was in suche gladnesse
That in his herte he demed/as I gesse
That there nys louer in this worlde at ese
So wel as he/and thus gan loue hym plese

The goodlyhede or beaute/whiche that lynde
In any other lady had ystette
Lasse al at the montenance of a gnat vnbynde
Aboute his herte/of al Creseydes nette
He was so narowe ymasshed/and ynette
That is vndon on any manere syde
That nyl nat ben/for aught that may betyde

And by the honde ful ofte he wolde take
This Pandarus/and in to gardyn lede
And suche a fest/and suche a processe make
Hym of Creseyde/and of her womanhede
And of her beaute/that without drede
It was an heuen his wordes for to here
And than he wolde synge in this manere

Loue/that of erthe and see hath gouernaunce
Loue/that his hertes hath in heuen hye
Loue/that with an holsome alyaunce
Halte people ioyned/as hym lyst hem gye
Loue/that knytteth lawe and compayny
And couples dothe in vertue for to dwel
Bynde this accorde/that I haue tolde/and tel

That the worlde with faith/which that is stable
Dyuerseth so his stoundes accordynge
That elementes that beth so discordable
Holden alsonde/perpetually durynge
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bringe
And that the mone hath lordshipe ouer nyghtes
Al this dothe Loue/aye herried be his mightes

That/that the see/that gredy is to flowen
Constrayneth to a certayne ende so
His floodes/that so fersly they ne growen
To drenchen erthe and al/for euer mo
And if that Loue aught lette his bridel go
Al that nowe loueth a sonder shulde lepe
And loste were al/that Loue halte nowe to hepe

So wolde to god/that authour is of lynde
That with his bonde/Loue of his vertue lyst
To sercheu hertes al/and faste bynde
That fro his bonde no wight the wey out wist
And hertes colde hem/wolde I that hem twist
To make hem loue/and that hem lyst ape rewe
On hertes sore/and rewe hem that ben trewe

In

In al nedes for the townes werre
He was/and aye the first in armes dight
And certainly/but if that bookes erre
Saue Hector/moste ydradde of any wight
And this encreace of hardynesse and might
Come hym of loue/ his ladyes thanke to wyn
That altered his spyrite so within

In tyme of truce on hawkyng wolde he ryde
Or els hunte bore/ beare/or lyoun
The smale hertes let he goo bisyde
And whan ỳ he come rydyng in to the towne
Ful ofte his lady from her wyndowe dowue
As fresshe as faucon/comen out of mue
Ful redy was him goodly to salue

And moste of loue & vertue was his speche
And in dispyte had al wretchydnesse
And doutelesse no nede was him beseche
To honouren hem/ that had worthynesse
And casen hem/that weren in distresse
And glad was he/if any wight wel ferde
That louer was/ whan he it wyste or herde

For sothe to sayne/he loste helde euery wight
But if he were in loues hygh seruyce
I meane folke that ought it ben of right
And ouer al this/so wel couthe he deuyse
Of sentement/and in so vncouthe wyse
Al his array/that euery louer thought
That al was wel/what so he said or wrought

And though that he be come of bloode royall
Him lyst of pride/at no wight for to chace
Benygne he was to echein generall
For whiche he gate him thanke in euery place
Thus wolde loue/yherped be his grace
That pride and yre/enuye/and auarice
He gan to flye/and euery other vice

Thou lady bright/the doughter of Diane
Thy blynde & wynged sonne ese day Cupide
ye sustren nyne ese/that by Helycone
In hyll Pernaso/lysten for to abyde
That ye thus ferre han deyned me to gyde
I can no more/but sens that ye wol wende
Ye herped ben for aye withouten ende

Through you haue I sayd fully in my songe
The feste and ioye of Troylus seruyce
Al be that there was some discase amonge
As myn auctour lysteth to deuyse
Thy thirde boke now we ende I in this wyse
And Troylus in lust and in quarte
Is with Creseyde/his owne herte swete

¶ Explicit liber Tertius.

But al to spitel/wela way the while
Lasteth such ioye/ythonked be fortune
That semeth trewest/whan she wol begyle
And can to fooles so her songe entune
That she hem hent/that lest traitour cõmune
And whan a wight is from her whele ythrowe
Than laugheth she/& maketh him the mowe

From Troylus she gan her bright face
Away to writhe/and toke of him non hede
And caste him clene out of her ladyes grace
And on her whele she set vp Diomede
For which myn herte right now gynneth blede
And now we my pen alas/ with which I write
Quaketh for drede/of that I muste endyte

For how Creseyde Troylus forsoke
Or at the leste/how that she was vnkynde
Wote hence forthe/ben mater of my boke
As wryten folke/through which it is in mynde
Alas that they shulde euer cause fynde
To speke her harme/& if they on her lye
Iwys hem self shulde haue the vilanye

O ye Herynes nyghtes doughtren thre
That endelesse complayne euer in payne
Megera/ Allecto/ and eke Tesiphone
Thou cruel Mars eke/father of Quirryne
Thou pitie Iouith bothe helpe me to fyne
So that the loos/ and loue/ and lyste pleye
Of Troylus be fully shewed here.

¶ Incipit liber Quartus.

Lygging in host/ as I haue said er this
The grekes stronge/aboute Troy tanyt
Befel/that whan that Phebus shynyng is
Vpon the brest of Hercules lyon
That Hector/with many a bolde baron
Caste on a day with grekes for to fyghte
As he was wont/to greue hem what he myghte

Lest

Lost I holde longe or shorte it was bytwene
This purpose/ & that day they fyghten wente
Out on a day wel armed bright and shene
Hector and many a worthy knyght out wente
With speare in honde/ and bygge bowes bente
And in the feelde withouten longer lette
Her sowdy in the feelde anon they mette

The longe day with speares sharpe ygrounde
With arowes/ dartes/ swerdes/ & maces fell
They fyghte/ & hungry horse & man to grounde
And with her axes out the braynes quell
But in the laste shoure/ sothe to tell
The folke of Troye hem selven so misledden
That with ye worse at night hom they fledden

At whiche day was taken Anthenor
Thaugre Polympdas/ at Thorsileo
Fostyppe/ Sarpedon/ Palestynor
Polyte/ or ese the Troyan day Ruphco
And other lasse folke/ as Phebus so
Dō that for harme ye day the folke of Troye
Dridden to lese a great parte of her ioye

Of Priamus was yeue/ at grekes requeste
A tyme of truce/ and tho they gonnen trete
Her prisoners to chaungen moste and leste
And for the surplus yeuen sommes grete
Thus tyding anon was couthe in euery strete
Bothe in thassege/ in towne/ and euery where
And with the first it came to Calkas eere

When Calkas knewe this tretyse shulde holde
In confort wente amonge the grekes stone
He gan in thang/ forthe with fordes olde
And sit him there as he was wonte to done
And with a chaunged face/ thus sade aboue
For sothe of god/ to done that reuerence
To stynten wopse/ & yeue him audyence

Than sayd he thus/ so fordes myne I was
Troyan/ as it is knowen out of drede
And if that you remembre/ I am Calkas
That alder first gaue comforte to youre nede
And tolde wel how we that ye shulde spede
For dredelesse thrugh you shal in a stounde
Thy Troy yburnt/ & beaten down to grounde

And in what forme/ or in what maner wyse
This towne to shende/ & al youre lustes tacheue
Ye haue er this wel herde me deuyse
This thyng we ye my fordes/ as I leue
And for the grekes weren me so leue
I came my selfe in my propre persone
To teche in this/ how you was best to done

Hauyng vnto my treasour/ ne my rent
Right no regarde/ in respecte of youre ease
Thus al my good I lefte/ and to you went
Wenyng in this you fordes for to please
But al that losse ne dothe me no disease
I vouchsafe/ as wisely haue I ioye
For you to lese/ al that I haue in Troye

Saue of a doughter that I lefte/ alas:
Sleppyng at home/ whan out of Troy I sterte
O sterne/ o cruel father that I was
How myght I haue my that so harde an herte:
Alas that I ne had brought her in my sherte
For sorow of which I wol nat liue to morow
But if ye fordes rewe vpon my sorowe

For bycause that I sawe no tyme er nowe
Her to delyuer/ tche holden haue my pees
But nowe or neuer/ if that it lyke you
I may her haue right soone doutlees
O helpe and grace/ among al this prees
Rewe on this olde captyse in dystresse
Sith I through you haue al this heynesse

Ye haue nowe caught/ and fettred in prison
Troyans ynowe/ and if your wylles be
By chylde with one maye haue redemption
Now we for the loue of god/ and of bounte
One of so sele alas/ so pese him me
What nede were it thus prayer for to werne
Sith ye shul haue/ both solde & towne as yerne

By peryl of my lyfe I shal nat lye
Apollo hath me tolde ful faithfully
I haue eke founde it by astronomy
By sothe/ and by augury trewly
And dare wel saye the tyme is fast by
That fyre & flambe on al ye towne shal sprede
And thus shal Troy turne to asshen dede

For

For certayne Phebus/and Neptunus bothe
That maden the walles of the toun
Ben with the folke of Troye alway so wroth
That they wol bring it to confusioun
Right in despyte of kyng Laomedoun
By cause he nolde payen hem her hyre
The towne of Troye shal ben set on fyre

Tellyng his tale alway this olde grey
Himmvle in his speche and lokyng ebe
The salte teeres from his eyen tweye
Ful faste ronnen downe by eyther cheke
So longe he gan of socourre hem beseke
That for to healen him of his sorowes sore
They gauen him Antenor/withouten more

But who was glad ynough/but Calcas tho
And of this thyng ful sone his nedes seyde
On hem that shulden for the tretyse go
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To bringen home kyng Thoas/& Creseyde
And whan Priam his safegarde sente
Thembassadours to Troy straught they wente

The cause I tolde of her cõmyng/the olde
Priam the kyng/ful sone in generall
Let here vpon his parlyment holde
Of whiche theffecte rehercen you I shal
Thembassadours ben answerde for fynall
The eschaunge of prisoners/and al this nede
Hem lyketh wel/and forthe in they procede

This Troylus was present in the place
Whan asked was for Antenor Creseyde
For whiche ful sone chaungen gan his face
As he that with tho wordes wel nyghe deyde
But natheless he no worde to it seyde
Leste men shulde his affection espye
With mannes herte/he gan his sorowes drye

And ful of anguysshe and of grisly drede
Abode/what other lordes wolde to it sey
And if they wolde graunt/as god forbede
Theschaunge of her/thã thought he thiges tweye
First/how we to saue her honour/& what weye
He might best theschaunge of her withstonde
Ful faste he caste how we al this might stonde

Love him made al prest to done her hyde
And rather dyen/than she shulde go
But Reason sayde him on that other syde
Withouten assent of her/do nat so
Leste for thy werke she wolde be thy foe
And sayn/that through thy medlig is falsnesse
Pour bother loue/there it was erst vnknowe

For whiche he gan deliberen for the best
And though the lordes wolde that she went
He wolde lete hem graunt what hem lest
And tel his lady first what that they ment
And whan that she had sayd him her entent
Therafter wolde he worken also lyne
Tho al the worlde ayen it wolde stryue

Hector whiche that wel the grekes herde
For Antenor/how they wolde haue Creseyde
Gan it withstonde/and soberly answerde
Sire/she nys no prisoner (he seyde)
I not on you who that this charge leyde
But on my parte/ye may estsones hav til
We vsen here/no women for to sel

The noyse of people vp sterte than at ones
As brymme as bisase of strawe pfet on fyre
For my fortune it wolde for the nones
They shulden her confusion despyre
Hector (qd they) what gost may you enspyre
This woman thus to shilde/and done vs lese
Dan Antenor/a wronge waye now ye chese

That is so wyse/and eke so bolde herein
And we haue nede to folke/as men may se
He is one the grettest of this towne
O Hector/lette thy fantasies be
O kyng Priam (qd they) thus seggen we
That al our bount is to forgone Creseyde
And to deliuer Antenor they preyde

O Juuenal lorde/trewe is thy sentence
That spitel wenen folke what is to pleye
That they ne fynden in her desyre offence
For cloude of errour lete hem discreye
What best is/and so/here ensample take we
These folke desyren now we delyuerance
Of Antenor that brought hem to mischefe

Fro

For he was after traytour to the toun
Of Troye alas/they quytte him out to rathe
O wyce woude/so thy discrecion
Creseyde/whiche that neuer dyd hem scathe
Shal now me no lenger in her glysse bathe
But Antenor/she shal come home to towne
And she shal out/ thus sayd Troylus and howne

For whiche delybered was by parlyament
For Antenor to yelden out Creseyde
And it pronounced by the presydent
Though that Hector may ful ofte prayde
And pleynly/what myght that it withsayde
It was for naught/it muste bey/ and sholde
For substaunce of the parlyament it wolde

Departed out of parlyament echone
Thus Troylus/ withoute wordes mo
Unto his chambre spedde him faste alone
But if it were a man of his ot two
The whiche he bade out faste for to go
Because he wolde slepen/as he sayde
And hastely upon his bedde him layde

And as in wynter leaues ben byraste
Eche after other tyl trees be bare
So that there nys but barke & braūche plaste
Lythe Troylus/byraste of ese welfare
Ywounded in the blacke barbe of care
Disposed woode out of his wytte to brayde
So sore hym sate the chaungyng of Creseyde

He tyrst him up/and euery doore he shette
And wyndowe eke/& tho thos sorowful many
Upon his beddes syde downe him sette
Ful lyke a dede ymage/pale and wan
And in his brest the heaped wo began
Out burste/and he to wexen in thos wyse
In hys woodnesse/as I shal you deuyse

Right as the wylde bulle begynneth springe
Now here now there/ydarted to the herte
And of his dethe roreth/in complaynyng
Right so gan he aboute the chambre sterte
Smytyng his brest/ape with his fystes smerte
His heed to the wall/his body to the grounde
Ful ofte he swapte him seluen to confounde

His eyen two for pyte of his herte
Out streamedeh as swythe as welles thees
The hyghe sobbes of his sore wes smerte
His speche him reste/ vnnethes myght he sey
O dethe alas/ why nyltē thou do me dey?
Acursed be that daye whiche that nature
Shope me to ben a lyues creature

But after whan the fury and al the rage
Whiche that his herte twyste/and fast threst
By length of tyme somwhat gan aswage
Upon his bedde he sayde him down to rest
But tho begon his teares more out to brest
That wonder is the body maye suffyse
To halse this wo/whiche that I you deuyse

Than sayd he thus: Fortune alas the wyle
What haue I done? what haue I ꝑ agylt?
How wel myghtest thou for routhe me begyle?
Is there no grace? and shal I thus be spylt?
Shal thus Creseyde awaye for ꝑ thou wylte
Alas: how wel mightest thou in thyn herte fynde
To ben to me thus cruell and vnkynde?

Haue I the nat honoured al my lyue?
As thou wel woteſt/aboue the goddes alle
Why wylte thou me fro ioye thus depryue
O Troylus/what may men no we the calle
But wrecche of wrecches/out of honour falle
In to misery/in whiche I wol bewayle
Creseyde alas/tyll that the brethe me fayle

Alas Fortune/if that my lyfe in ioye
Displeased had vnto thy foule enuye
Why ne haddeſt thou my father kyng of Troye
Deraste the lyfe/or doneny brethery dye
Or slayne my selfe/ ꝑ thus complayne & crye
I combre woulde/ that may of nothyng serue
But euer dye/and neuer fully sterue

If that Creseyde alone were me lafte
Naught raught I whyder thou woldeſt me
And her alas/thā hast thou me byraft (stere
But euermore/ so this is thy maner
To reue a wight/that moste is to hym dere
To preue in that thy grefful vyolence
Thus say I soothe/there helpeth no defence

O Very lorde/ O loue/ o god alas
That knowest best myn hert/ & al my thought
What shal my sorouful lyfe done in this caas
If I forgo that I so dere haue bought
Sens ye Cresеyde & me haue fully brought
In to your grace/ and both our hertes sealed
How we may ye suffre alas it be repealed

What I may done I shal/ whyle I may dure
On lyue/ in turment and in cruel payne
This unfortune/ or this disaventure
Alone as I was borne I wol complayne
Ne neuer wol I sene it shyne or rayne
But ende I wol as Edippe in derknesse
Myn sorouful lyfe/ and dyen in distresse

O wery goste/ that errest to and fro
Why nylt thou flyen out of the wofulleste
Body ⁊ that euer might on grounde go
O soule/ lurkyng in this woful neste
Flye forthout myn herte/ and let it breste
And folowe alway Cresеyde thy lady dere
Thy right place is nowe no lenger here

O woful eyen two/ sens your disporte
Was al to sene Cresеydes eyen bright
What shal ye done/ but for my discomforte
Stonden for naught/ & wepen out your spright
Sens she is queynt/ ꝑ wont was you to light
In veyne from this forth haue I eyen two
Formed/ sens your vertue is away

O my Cresеyde/ O lady souerayne
Of this woful soule that thus crieth
Who shal nowe reuen comforte to thy payne
Alas no wight/ but whan myn herte dyeth
Myn spyrite/ which that so vnto you hyeth
Receyue in gree/ for that shal aye you serue
For thy no force is/ though the body sterue

O ye louers/ that hygh vpon the whele
Yet sette of Fortune/ in good aventure
God lene that ye synden aye loue of stele
And longe mote your lyfe in ioye endure
But whan ye comen by my sepulture
Remembreth that your felowe vrieth there
For I loued eke/ though I vnworthy were

O olde, vnholsome and misshaped mayn
Calkas I meane/ alas what eyled the
To bey a grekes sens thou art borne Troyan
O Calkas/ whiche that wolde my bane be
In cursed tyme waste thou borne for me
As wolde vlyssul Ioue for his ioye
That I the had where I wolde in Troye

A thousande syghes hotter than the glede
Out of his brest/ eche after other went
Medled with playnte newe/ hos wo to fede
For whiche his woful teres neuer stente
And shortly so his sorowes hym to rente
And woye so mate/ that ioye or penaunce
He feleth none/ but lyeth in a traunce

Pandare/ whiche that in the parlyment
Had herde what euery lorde & burgeys seyde
And how ful graunted was by one assent
For Antenor/ to yelden out Cresеyde
Gan wel nygh wode out of his wyt to breyde
So that for wo he nyste what he mente
But in a rage to Troylus he wente

A certayne knyght/ that for the tyme kepte
The chambre doore/ vndyd it hym anoy
And Pandare that ful tenderly wepte
In to the derke chambre as stylle as stone
Towarde the bedde gan softely to gone
So confuse/ that he nyste what to say
For very wo/ his wytte was nyghe away

And with chere and lokyng al to torne
For sorowe of this/ & with his armes folden
He stode this woful Troylus beforne
And on his pytous face he gan beholden
Out so ofte gan his herte colden
Seyng his frende in wo/ whose heuynesse
His herte slough/ as thought him for distresse

This woful wight/ this Troylus that sate
His frende Pandare pytously to se
Gan as the snowe ayenst the sonne melte
For whiche this woful Pandare/ of pyte
Gan for to wepe/ as tenderly as he
And specheleſſe thus ben they sitte twey
That neyther might for sorowe o worde sey

But

But at the laste/this wofull Troylus,
Sygh derd for smert/ gan bresten out to rore
And with a sorowful noyse he sayd thus
Amonges hys sobbes and hys syghes sore
Lo Pandare I am derd/ withouten more
Hast thou not herde at parlyament he seyde
For Antenor how we loste as my Creseyde

This Pandare ful derd and pale of hewe
Ful pitously answerde/and sayd yeu
As wisely were it false as it is trewe
That I haue herde/ and wote al how it is
O merry god/ who wolde haue trowed this
Who wolde haue wende/ þ in so lytel a throwe
Fortune our ioye wolde haue ouerthrowe

For in this worlde there is no creature
As to my dome/that euer sawe ryyne
Straūger than this/throughe caso or auēture
But who may al eschue or al deuyne
Suche is this worlde/for thy I thus despyne
Nor trust no wight to synde in Fortune
Aye propretie/her pestes ben comune

But tel me this/why thou art nowe so mad
To sorowen thus/ why lyst thou in this wyse
Sens thy desyre al holly hast thou had
So that by right/it ought ynough suffyse
But I that neuer felte in my seruyce
A frendly cheere or lokyng of an eye
Let me thus wepe and waylen tyl I dye

And ouer al this/ as thou wel woste thy selue
This towne is full of ladyes al aboute
And to my dome/ fayrer than suche twelue
As euer she was/ shal I fynden in some route
Pleasaunt or fresshe/ withouten any doute
For thy be glad myn owne dere brother
If she be loste/ we shal recouer an other

What god forbyd alway that ethe plesaunce
In o thyng were/ and in non other wyght
If one can synge/ another can wel daunce
If this be goodly/ she is glad and light
And this is sayd/ and that can good aright
Ethe for hys vertue holden is for dere
Bothe heroner and fawcon for ryuere

And ebe as wit fareth/ that was ful wyse
The newe loue out chaseth ofte the olde
And vpon newe case lythe newe aduyse
Thynke ebe thy selfe to sauen art thou holde
Suche fyre by processe/ shal of hymself colde
For sens it is but casuel plesaunce
Some case shal put it out of remembraunce

For also sure as day cometh after nyght
The newe loue/ sabour/ or other wo
Or ells selde seynge of a wight
Done olde affections al ouer go
And for thy parte/ thou shalte haue one of tho
To abredge with thy bytter paynes smerte
Absence of her/ shal dryue her out of herte

These wordes sayd he for the nones all
To helpe his frende/ lesse he for sore we deyde
For douteles to doy his wo to fall
He raught not what vnthryft that he seyde
But Troylus that nygh for sore wo deyde
Toke lytel hede/ of al that euer he mente
One eere it herde/ at the other out it went

But at the laste he answerde/ & sayd frende
This lecheraste/ or healed thus to be
Were wel spyttyng/ if that I were a fende
To trapen a wight/ that trewe is vnto me
I pray god let this counsayle neuer thee
But rather wolde sterue anon right here
Er I thus done/ as thou me woldest here

She that I serue yuis/ what so thou seye
To whom myn herte enhabyt is by right
Shal haue me holly hers tyll that I deye
For Pandarus/ sens I haue trouth hir hight
I wol nat ben vntrewe for no wight
But as her man I wol aye serue and serue
And neuer none other creature serue

And ther thou sayest thou shalt as sayre synde
As she/ let be/ make no comparyson
To creature yformed here by kynde
O leue Pandare/ in conclusyon
I wol nat ben of thyn opinyon
Touchyng al this/ for which I the beseche
So hold thy peace/ thou sleest me wt thy speche

Thou byddest me I shulde loue another
Al freshly newe/and let Creseyde go
Is it nat in my power leue brother
And though I might/ yet wol I nat do so
But canste thou playen raket to and fro
Nettle in docke out/now this now ỳ Pãdare
Now foule fall her for thy wo that care

Nay god wote/naught worthe is al thy rede
For whiche/for what that euer may befall
Withouten wordes mo I wol ben deed
O dethe/that endest arte of sorowes all
Come now/sens I so ofte after the call
For selp is that dethe/ sothe for to sayne
That ofte ycleped/ cometh and endeth payne

Thou farest eke by me Pandarus
As he/that whan a wight is wo bygon
He cometh to him a pace/and saith right thus
Thynke nat on smerte/ & thou shalt sele none
Thou mayste me first transmewen in a stone
And reue me my passions all
Or thou so lighly do my wo to fall

Wel wote I/whyle my lyfe was in quiete
Er thou me slewe/ I wolde haue yeuen hyre
But nowe thy cõming is to me so swete
That in this worlde/ I nothyng so desyre
O dethe/sens with this sorowe I am a fyre
Thou eyther do me anon in teeres drenche
Or with thy colde strok myn herte quenche

The dethe may wel out of my brest departe
The lyfe so longe may this sorowe myne
But fro my soule shal Creseydes darte
Out neuermore/but dowelle with Proserpyne
Whan I am deed/I wol wonne in pyne
And there I wol eternally complayne
Wy wo/ & howe that twynned be we twayne

Sens that thou sleest so fele in sondrie wyse
Ayenst her wyll/ vnpraped day and nyght
Do me at my requeste this seruyce
Delyuer nowe the worlde/ so doste thou right
Of me that am the wofullest wight
That euer was/for tyme is that I sterue
Sens I this world of right naught do I serue

Thou haste here made an argument for fyne
Howe that it shulde lasse payne be
Creseyde to forgoy/for she was myne
And lyued in ease and in felycite
Why gabbest thou/that saydest vnto me
That him is worse that is fro wele ythrawe
Than he had erst none of that wele yknowe

This Troylus in teeres gan distyll
As scheure out of allambyke ful fast
And Pandarus gan holde his tonge styll
And to the grounde his eyen downe he caste
But natheles/thus thought he at last
What parde/rather than my selawe dey
Yet shal I somwhat more vnto him sey

But tel me nowe/sens ỳ the thynketh so light
To chaungen so in loue aye to and fro
Why haste thou nat done besily thy might
To chaungen her/that dothe the al thy wo?
Why nylte thou let her fro thyn herte go?
Why nylte thou loue another lady swete
That may thyn herte setten in quyete?

And false frende/sens thou hast suche distresse
And sens the lyst myne argumentes blame
Why nylt thy seluen helpe doy redresse
And with thy manhode letten al this game
Go ramisch her/ne canst thou nat for shame?
And eyther let her out of towne fare
Or holde her styll/and leaue thy nyce fare

If thou haste had in loue aye yet mischaunce
And canste it nat out of thyn herte dryue
I that lyued in lust and in plesaunce
With her/as moche as creature on lyue
Howe shulde I that forpet/and that so blyue
O where hast thou ben hyd so longe in mewe
That canste so wel and formelyche argewe

Arte thou in Troye/ and haste non hardynesse
To take a wight/ whiche that loueth the
And wolde her seluen ben of thyn assent
Nowe is nat this a nyce Iapyte
Ryse vp anon/and let this wepyng be
And sythe thou arte a man/ for in this hous
I wol ben deed/or she shal ben out

To

To this answerde hym Troylus ful soste
And sayd/I wys my leue brother dere
Al this haue I my selfe yet thought ful ofte
And more thyng than thou devyseſt here
But why this thig is last/ thou shalt wel here
And whan thou haste me yeuen audyence
Thereafter mayst thou tell al thy sentence

Firſt syn yᵘ wost this town hath al this werre
For rauyſshyng of women so by might
It shulde nat ben suffred me to erre
As it stonte now/ne done so great vnright
I shulde haue also blame of euery wight
Thy fathers graunt if that I so withstode
Sens she is chaunged for the townes gode

I haue eke thought/so it were her assent
To asse her at my father of his grace
Than thynke I/this were her accusement
Sens wel I wot I may her nat purchace
For sens my father in so hygh a place
As parlyment/hath her eschaunge enseled
He nyll for me his lettre be repealed

Yet drede I moste her herte to perturbe
With vyolence/if I do suche a game
For if I wolde it openly disturbe
It muste be disclaundre to her name
And me were leuer dye than her diffame
As nolde god/ but I shulde haue
Her honour/ leuer than my lyfe to saue

Thus am I loste/for aught that I can se
For certayne is that I am her knight
I muste her honour leuer haue than me
In euery case/os ouer ought of right
Thus am I with desyre and reason twyght
Desyre for to destourben her me redeth
And Reason nyl nat/ so myn herte dredeth

Thus wepyng/that he coulde neuer cease
He sayd alas/how we shal I wretche fare
For wel fele I alway my loue encrease
And hope is lasse and lasse Pandare
Encreasen eke the causes of my care
So wela way/why nyl myn herte breste
For as in loue there is but lytel reste

Pandare answerde/frende thou mayst for me
Done as the lyst/but had I it so hote
And thyn estate/she shulde go with me
Tho al this town cryed on this thing by note
I nolde set at al that noyse a grote
For whā may haue cryed than wol they roun
Eke wonder last but .xy. dayes neuer in toun

Deuyne nat in reason aye so depe
Ne curtesly/but helpe thy selfe anone
Bet is that other than thy seluen wepe
And namely sens ye two ben al one
Ryse vp/for by myn heed she shal nat gone
And rather be in blame a lytel yfounde
Thā sterue here as a gnat withouten wounde

It is no shame vnto you ne to vyce
Her to with holden/that ye loueth moste
Paraventure she might holde the for nyce
To letten her go thus vnto the grekes hoste
Thynke eke fortune/ as wel thy seluen woste
Helpeth hardy man vnto his empryse
And weyueth wretches/for her cowardyse

And though thy lady wolde aryse her greue
Thou shalt thy selfe thy peace herafter make
But as to me certayne I can nat leue
That she wolde it as now for pure take
Why shulde than for feare thyn herte quake
Thynke how Paris hath/that is thy brother
A loue/and why shalt thou nat haue another

And Troylus/o thyng I dare the swere
That if Cresyde/ whiche that is thy lefe
Now loueth the/as wel as thou doest here
God helpe me so/she nyl nat take a grefe
Though thou do boote anon in this mischefe
And if she wylneth fro the for to passe
Than is she false/so loue her wel the lasse

For thy take herte/ and thynke right as a knight
Through loue is broken alday euery lawe
Eythe now somwhat thy corage and thy might
Haue mercy on thy selfe for any awe
Let nat this wretched wo thyn herte gnawe
But manly set the worlde on syde and seuen
And if thou dye a martyr go to heuen

N.h.iii. I wol

I wol my ſelfe bey with the at this dede
Though I and al my kyn vpon a ſtounde
Shulde in a ſtrete/as dogges fyggen deede
Through gyte with many a blooy wounde
In euery caſe I wol a frende be founde
And if the lyſteth here ſterue as a wretche
A dieu/ the dyuel ſpede hym that retche

This Troylus gan with tho wordes quicken
And ſayd frende/graunt mercy/ I aſſent
But certainly thou mayſte nat ſo me pricken
Ne payne none ne may me ſo turment
That for no caſe/it is nat myn entent,
At ſhorte wordes/though I dyen ſholde
To ranyſſhen her/but if her ſelfe it wolde

Why/ſo meane I (qđ Pandarus) al this day
But tel me than/haſte thou her wel aſſayde
That ſoroweſt thus: & he anſwerde hym nay
Wherof art thou (qđ Pãdare) than diſmayde
That noſte nat that ſhe wol bey yuel apayde
To rauyſſhen her/ſens thou haſt nat bey ther
But if that Ioue tolde it in thyn eere

For thy ryſe vp as naught ne were anoy
And waſſhe thy face/ & to the kyng thou wẽde
Or he may wondren whyder thou arte goy
Thou muſt with wiſdom/ hym & other vtende
Or vpon caſe he may after the ſende
Or thou beware/ and ſhortly brother dere
Be glad/ & let me werke in this matere

For I ſhal ſhape it ſo/that ſykerly
Thou ſhalt this night fõtyme in ſom manere
Come ſpeken with thy lady priuely
And by her wordes eke/as by her chere
Thou ſhalte ful ſone aperceyue & wel here
Of her entent/and in this caſe the beſte
And fare nowe wel/for in this poynt I reſte

¶ The ſwyſte fame/which that falſe thynges
Equall reporteth lyke the thynges trewe
Was throughout Troy iſſed/w[i]t preſt wynges
Fro man to man/and made his tale al newe
How Calcas doughter with her bright hewe
At parlyment without wordes more
Igraunted was/in chaunge of Anteneore

The whiche tale anon right as Creſeyde
Had herde/ſhe whiche ỳ of her father rought
(As in this caſe) right nauȝt/ne whã he deyde
Ful beſily to Jupiter beſought.
Yeue hem miſchaunce/that this treſpy brought
But ſhortly leſte theſe tales ſothe were
She durſte at no wyght aſken it for feere

As ſhe that had her herte and al her mynde
On Troylus yſet ſo wonder faſte
That al this worlde ne miȝt her loue vnbynde
Ne Troylus out of her herte caſte
She wolde bey his/whyle ỳ her lyfe may laſt
And ſhe thus brenneth bothe in loue & drede
So that ſhe nyſte what was beſt to rede

But as men ſene in towne/and al aboute
That women vſen her frendes to viſyte
So to Creſeyde of women came a route
For pytous ioye/and wenden her delyte
And with her tales dere ynough a myte
Theſe women/whiche that in the cyte dwell
They ſet hem downe/ and ſayd as I ſhal tell

(Quod firſt that one) I am glad trewly
Bycauſe of you/that ſhal your father ſe
Another ſayd/ywis ſo am nat I
For al to lytel hath ſhe with vs be
(Quod tho the thirde) I hope iwys that ſhe
Shal bringen vs the peace on euery ſyde
That whan ſhe gothe/almighty god her gyde

Tho wordes and tho womannyſſhe thynges
She herde hem right as though ſhe thẽe were
For god it wote/her herte on other thyng is
Although the body ſate amonge hem there
Her aduertence is alway elſ where
For Troylus ful faſte her ſoule ſought
Withouten worde/ on him alway ſhe thought

Theſe women that thus wenden her to plyſe
Aboute naught gonne al her tales ſpende
Suche vanyte ne can done her none eſe
As ſhe that al this meane whyle brende
Of other paſſyon than they wende
So that ſhe felte almoſte her herte dye
For wo/and wery of that companye

For

For whiche might she no lenger restrayne
Her teeres/they gan so vp to well
That gaue signes of her bytter payne
In whiche her spyrit was/and musie dwell
Remembring her from heuen vnto which hell
She fallen was/sens she forgo the syght
Of Troylus/and sorowfully she sygh

And thyke fooles/sittyng her aboute
Wende that she wept and syghed sore
Vpcause that she shulde out of the route
Departen/and neuer play with hem more
And they that had knowen her of yore
Se her so wepe/& thought it was vyndnesse
And eche of hem wepte eke for her distresse

And besily they gonnen her to comforten
One thig god wote/on whiche she lytel thought
And with her tales wenden her disporten
And to be glad they ofte her besought
But suche an ease therwith they her wrought
Right as a man is cased for to fele
For ache of heed/to clawen hym on his hele

But after al this nyce vanyte
They toke her leue / and home they wenten al
Creseyde full of sorowfull pyte
In to her chambre vp went out of the hall
And on her bedde she gan for deed to fall.
In purpose neuer thence for to ryse
And thus she wrought/as I shal you deuyse

Her owunded heert/y sonnyssh she was of hewe
She rent/and eke her fyngers longe & smale
She wronge ful ofte/& bade god on her rewe
And with the dethe to do bote on her bale
Her hewe whylom bright/that tho was pale
Bare wytnesse of her wo/and her contrepute
And thus she spake/sobbyng in her conceyte

Alas (quod she) out of this regioun
I wosul wretche and infortuned wight
And borne in cursed constellacioun
Mote gone/and thus departen fro my knight
Wo worthe alas/that ilke dayes lyght
On which I sawe hym first with eyen twayn
That causeth me/ and I hym al this payne

Ther with the teeres from her eyen two
Downe fell/as shoure in Aprill swythe
Her whyte brest she bette/and for the wo
After the dethe she cryed a thousande sythe
Sens he that wonte her wo was for to sythe
She mote forgon/for whiche disauenture
She helde her selfe a forlost creature

She sayd/ howe shal he done and I also
Howe shulde I lyue/if y I from hym twynne
O dere herte eke that I loue so
Who shal that sorowe sleen/ that ye ben inne?
O Calkas father/thyn be al this synne
O mother myn/that cleaped were Argyue
Wo worth that day/that thou me bare on lyue

To what fyne shulde I lyue & sorowen thus?
Howe shulde a fysshe withouten water dure?
What is Creseyde worthe from Troylus?
Howe shulde a plante or lyues creature?
Lyue withouten his kynde norriture?
For whiche ful ofte/a by worde here I sey
That roteles mote grene sone dey

I shal don thus/sens neyther swerde ne darte
Dare I none handle/for the cruelte
That eke day that I fro you departe
If sorowe of that nyl me nat my bane be
Than shal no meate ne drinke come in me
Til I my soule out of my breste vnshethe
And thus my seluen wol I don to dethe

And Troylus/my clothes euerychone
Shul blacke ben/in tokenyng herte swete
That I am as out of this worlde agone
That wonte was you to set in quyete
And of myn ordre aye/til dethe me mete
The obseruaunce euer in your absence
Shal sorowe ben/complaynt/& abstinence

Wyn herte/and eke the wofull goste therin
Vnquethe I with your spyrite to complayne
Eternally/for they shal neuer twyn
For though in erthe twynned be we twayne
Yet in the felde of pyte/out of payne
That hight Elisos/shal we ben yfere
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere

Thus

Thus herte myn/ for Antenor alas
I sone shal be chaunged/ as I wene
But how we shul ye done in this sorouful caas
How we shal your tendre herte this sustene
But herte myn/ for pet this sorowe and tene
And me also/ for sothly for to sey
Do ye wel fare/ I recche nat to dey

How we might it euer redde ben or pfonge
The playnt that she made in her distresse
I not/ but as for me my tytel tonge
If I discryuen wolde her heupnesse
It shulde make her sorowe seme lesse
Than that it was/ and childysshly desface
Her hye complaynte/ and therfore I it pace

Pandare/ whiche that sent from Troylus
Was vnto Cresepde/ as ye haue herde deuyse
That for the beste it was acorded thus
And he ful glad to don him that seruyse
Vnto Cresepde in a ful secrete wyse
There as she lay/ in turment and in rage
Came her to tell al hoy his message

And fonde that she her seluen gan to trete
Ful pytously/ for with her salte teeres
Her brest and face pbathed was ful wete
Her mighty tresses of her sonnysshe heeres
Vnbroden/ hangen al aboute her eeres
Whiche pane him very signe of matiere
Of dethe/ whiche that her herte gan desyre

Whan she him sawe/ she gan for sorowe anoy
Her tery face/ at wyndow her armes hyde
For whiche this Pandare is so wo bygon
That in the house he might vnneth abyde
As he that felte sorowe on euery syde
For if Cresepde had erste complayned sore
Tho gan she playne a thousande tymes more

And in her aspre playnte/ thus she seyde
Pandare/ first of ioyes mo than two
Was cause/ causyng vnto me Cresepde
That nowe transmued ben in cruell wo
Whether shal I say to you welcome or no?
That alderfirst me brought vnto seruyse
Of loue alas/ that endeth in suche wyse

Endeth than loue in wo? ye or men lyeth
And al worldly blysse/ as thynketh me
The ende of blysse aye sorowe it ocupyeth
And who troweth nat that it so be
Let him vpon me wofful wretche se
That my selfe hate/ and aye my byrthe curse
Felyng alway/ fro wicke I go to worse

Who so me seeth/ he seeth sorowe al atonis
Payne/ turment/ playnte/ wo/ and distresse
Out of my wofful body harme there none is
As langour/ anguyssche/ cruel bytternesse
Annoye/ smert/ drede/ surye/ and ebe sykenesse
I trowe pwis from heuen teeres rayne
For pyte of my aspre and cruel payne

And thou my suster/ ful of discomforte
(Quod Pandarus) what thinkest thou to do?
Why nil haste thou to thy seluen some resport:
Why wylt thou thus thy selfe alas for do?
Leaue al this werke/ and take no wede to
That I shal sayne/ and herken of good entente
This message/ pe vp me Troylus pou sente

Turned her tho Cresepde/ a wo making
So great/ that it a dethe was for to se
Alas (qd she) what wordes may ye bring
What wol my derr herte sayne to me
Whiche that I drede neuer more to se
Wol he haue playnte or teeres er I wende
I haue ynough/ if he therafter sende

She was right suche to sene in her vysage
As is that wight that men on bere bynde
Her face lyke of paradys the pmage
Was al pchaunged in another kynde
The play pe laughter/ me were wont to fynde
On her/ and ebe her ioyes euerychone
Ben fledde/ and thus sythe Cresepde alone

Aboute her eyen two/ a purpre ryng
Bytrent/ in soth fast token yng of her payne
That to beholde it was a deedly thyng
For whiche Pandare nught nat restrayne
The teeres from his eyen for to rayne
But nathelesse as he best might he seyde
From Troylus these wordes to Cresepde

To next

Lo nece/ I trowe ye han herde al howe
The kyng with other lordes for the beste
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you
That cause is of this sorowe a thes vntreste
But howe this case dothe Troylus moleste
This may none erthly mannes tonge say
For very wo/ his wytte is al away

For whiche we haue so sorowed/ he and I
That in to lytel/ it had vs bothe slawe
But through my counsayle this day fynally
He somwhat is fro wepyng withdrawe
And semeth me that he desyreth fawe
With you to ben al nyght for to deuyse
Remedy of this/ if there were any wyse

This shorte y playne/ the effecte of my message
As forthe as my wytte can comprehende
For ye that ben of turment in suche rage
Way to no long: prologe as nowe entende
And herupon ye may answere hym sende
And for the loue of god my nece dere
So leaue this wo or Troylus be here

Great is my wo (qd she) and syghed sore
As she that feleth deedly sharpe distresse
But yet to me his sorowe is moche more
That loue hym bet than he hym selfe I gesse
Alas/ for me hath he suche heuynesse
Lay he for me so pitously complayne
Ioye this sorowe doubleth al my payne

Grenous to me god wot is for to dwyne
(Quod she) but yet it harder is to me
To fele that sorowe/ whiche that he is inne
For wel wote I/ it wol my bane be
And dye I wol in certayne tho (quod she)
But bydde hym come/ er deth y thus me threteth
Daun out y goost/ whiche in myn herte beteth

These wordes sayd/ she on her armes two
Fyll grufle/ and gan to wepen pitously
(Quod Pandarus) alas why do ye so
Nece ye wel wote the tyme is short by
That he shal come/ aryse vp hastily
That he you nat by wepen thus ne fynde
But ye wol haue hym wode out of his mynde

For wyste he that ye farde in this manere
He wolde hym selfe slee: and if I wende
To haue this fare/ he shulde nat come here
For al the good that Priam may dispende
For to what fyne he wolde anon pretende
That knowe I wel/ and for thy yet I sey
Do leaue this sorowe/ or plainly he wol dey

And shapeth you his sorowe for to abredge
And nat encrease/ lese nere swete
Bethe rather to him cause of plat than edge
And with some wysdom/ pe his sorowes bete
What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete
Or though pe bothe in salte teres dreynte
Yet is a tyme of cure aye than of pleynte

I meane thus/ whan I him hyther bringe
Sens ye be wyse/ and bothe of one assent
So shapeth howe to disfourthe your gopinge
Or come ayen sone after ye be went
Women ben wyse/ in shorte auysement
And set sene howe your wyt shal auayle
And what y I may helpe/ it shal nat fayle

Go (quod Creseyde) and Vncle trewly
I shal done al my might me to restrayne
From wepyng in his syght/ and besily
Him for to glad/ I shal done al my payne
And in my herte feyen euery trayne
If to this sore there may ben founden salue
It shal nat lacke certayne on myn halue

Gothe Pandarus/ and Troylus he sought
Fyl in a temple he founde him al alone
As he that of his lyfe no lenger rought
But to the pytouse goddes euerychone
Ful tendrely he prayed/ and made his mone
To done him sone out of this worlde to pace
For wel he thought ther was non other grace

And shortly al the sothe for to seye
He was so fallen in dispayre that day
That vtterly he shope him for to deye
For right thus was his argument alway
He sayd he nas but lorne wela way
For al that cometh/ cometh by necessyte
Thus to ben lorne it is my destyne

For

For certainly this wote I wel he sayde
That forestyght of dyuyne purueyaunce
Had sene alway me to forgon Creseyde
Sens god seeth euery thyng out of doutaunce
And hem disposeth through his ordynaunce
In his mercyes sothly for to be
As they shul comen by predestyne

But natheless alas/whom shal I leue
For there ben great clerkes many one
That destynie/through argumentes preue
And some sayne that nedely there is none
But that free choyce is yeuen vs euerychone
O welaway/so sygh arne clerkes olde
That I not whose opinyon I may holde

For some men sayne/ ỹ god seeth al byforne
Ne god may nat disceyued ben parde
Tha mote it fallen/though men had it sworn
That purueyaunce hath sene beforne to be
Wherfore I say/that from eterne if he
Hath wyst beforn our thought eke as our dede
We haue no free choyce/ as these clerkes rede

For other thought/nor other dede also
Might neuer ben/but suche as purueyaunce
Whiche may nat ben disceyued neuer mo
Hath seled byforne/withouten ignoraunce
For if there might ben a Variaunce
To writhen out fro goddes pureueyng
There were no prescience of thyng cõmyng

But it were rather an opinyon
Uncertayne/and no stedfast foreseyng
And certes that were an abusyon
That god shuld haue no parfyte clere weyng
More than we men/ ỹ haue doutous weneyng
But suche an errour vpon god to gesse
Were falsse and foule/and wicked cursednesse

Eke this is an opinyon of some
That haue her toppe ful high & smothe yshore
They sayne right thus/ ỹ thing is nat to come
For that the prescience hath sene before
That it shal come/but they sayne ỹ therfore
That it shal come/therfore the purueyaunce
Wote it beforne withouten ignoraunce

And in this maner this necessyte
Retourneth in his parte contrary agayne
For nedefully behoueth it nat to be
That thilke thynges fallen in certayne
That be purueyed/but nedefully as they sayn
Behoueth it that thynges whiche that fall
That they in certayne ben purueyed all

I meane as though I laboured me in this
To enquire which thinge cause of which thing be
As whether that the prescience of god is
The certayne cause of the necessyte
Of thynges that to comen be parde
Or if necessyte of thyng comyng
Be cause certayne of the purueyeng

But no we ne enforce I me nat in shewyng
How the ordre of ỹ causes stãt/but wel wot I
That it behoueth that the befallyng
Of thinges wyste before certainly
Be necessarye/al seme it nat therby
That prescience put fallyng necessayre
To thyng to come/al fall it foule or fayre

For if there syt a man ponde on a see
That by necessyte behoueth it
That certes thyn opinyon sothe be
That wenest or conjectest that he syt
And further ouer/no we a yen warde yet
Lo/ right so is it on the parte contrarye
As thus/no we herken for I wol nat tarye

I say that if the opinyon of the
Be sothe for that he syt/than say I this
That he mote sytten by necessyte
And thus necessyte in either is
For in him nede of sittyng is ywis
And in the nede of sothe/and thus forsothe
There mote necessyte ben in you bothe

But thou maist sayne ỹ man syt nat therfore
That thyn opinyon of his sytting sothe is
But rather for the man sate there before
Therfore is thyn opinyon sothe ywis
And I say/ though the cause of sothe of this
Cometh of his sytting/ yet necessyte
Is entrechaunged/bothe in him and in the

This

Thus in the same wyse out of doutaunce
I may wel maken/as it semeth me
Thy resonyng of goddes purueyaunce
And of the thynges that to comen be
By whiche reson men may wel yse
That thyslbe thynges that in erthe fall
That by necessyte they comen all

For al thoughe that forthing shal come ywis
Therfore is it purueyed certainly
Lat that it cometh for it purueyed is
yet nathelesse behoueth it nedefully
That thyng to come be purueyed trewly
Or elis thynges that purueyed be
That they betyden by necessyte

And this suffyseth right ynough certayne
For to destroye our free chopce euerydell
But now we is this accusyon to sayne
That fallyng of the thynges temporell
Is cause of the goddes prescience eternell
Lo we trewly that is a false sentence
That thing to come shulde cause his prescience

What might I wene if I had such a thought?
But that god purueyeth thing that is to come
For that it is to come/and elis nought
So might I wene that thinges al and some
That whylom ben byfall and ourcome
Ben cause of thylke sourrayne purueyaunce
That forwote al/withouten ignoraunce

And ouer al this/yet say I more ouer this
That right as whan I wote there is a thyng
Thus that thyng mote nedefully be so
Ek right so/whan I wote a thyng comyng
So mote it come/and thus the befallyng
Of thynges that ben wyst before the tyde
They mowe nat ben eschewed on no syde

Than sayd he thus/almighty Ioue in trone
That wottest of al this thyng the sothfastnesse
Rewe on my sorowe/and do me dyen sone
Or elles Atrepde fro me fro this destresse
And whyle he was in al this heuynesse
Disputyng with him selfe in this matere
Lowe Pandare in/is sayd as ye may here

O mighty god (quod Pandarus) in trone
Eyghe/who sawe euer a wyse man swerne so?
Why Troylus/what thynkest thou to done?
Hastu thou suche lustes to ben thyn owne foe?
What parde/yet is nat Atrepde ago
Why lyst the so thy selfe sorden sorowe
That in thyn heed/thyn eyen sonken dede?

Hastu nat lyued many a yere before
Withouten her? and sarde ful wel at ease
Arte thou for her and for none other borne
Hath pryde the wrought al only her to plese
Let be and thinke right thus in thy disease
That in the daye/right as there fallen chaunces
Right so in loue there come ek goyn plesaunces

And yet this is a wonder most of al
Why thou thus sorowest sithe yᵘ wost nat yet
Touchyng her goyng/how we that it shal fal
Ne if she can her selfe disseuren it
Thou hast nat yet assayed al her wyt
A man may mape al betyme his necke bede
Whan it shal of/and sorowen at the nede

For thy take hede of al that I shal say
I haue with her yspoke and longe ybe
So as accorded was betwixe vs twey
And euermore me thynketh thus/that she
Hath somwhat in her hertes pryuyte
Wher with she can/if I shal aright rede
Disseuren al this/of which thou arte in drede

For whiche my counsayle is/whan it is nyght
Thou to her go/and make of this an ende
And blyssful Iuno/through her great myght
Shal as (I hope) her grace vnto vs sende
Eyther herte stith certayne she shal nat wende
And for thy put/thyne hert a whyle in rest
And holde thy purpose/for it is the best

This Troylus answerde/and syghed sore
Thou sayest right wel/and I wyl do right so
And what him lyste/he sayd vnto him more
And whan that it was tyme for to go
Full prively him selfe withouten mo
Vnto her came/as he was wonte to done
And how they wrought/I shal you tell sone

Sothe

Sothe is/that whan they gonne first to mete
So gan the payne her hertes for to twyste
That neyther of hem other myght grete
But hem in armes tobe/and after kyste
The lasse wofull of hem bothe wyste
Wher ỳ he was/ne myght o worde out bringe
As I sayd erste/for wo and for sobbyng

The wofull teeres that they leten fall
As bytter weren out of teeres kynde
For payne/as is signe/aloes/or gall
So bytter teeres wept nat as I fynde
The wofull Hypsa/through the barbe ꝛ rynde
That in this worlde ther nys so harde an hert
That nolde haue rewed on her paynes smerte

But whan her wofull wery goste twayne
Retourned hem/there as hem ought to dwell
And that somwhat to weaken gan the payne
Up length of playnte/ꝛ ebben gan the well
Of her teeres/and the herte vnswell
Wt vnkeu voice/al horse for shyght Creseyde
To Troylus these yike wordes sayde

O Joue I dye/and mercy the beseche
Helpe Troylus: ꝛ therwithal her face
Upon his brest she layde/and soste speche
Her wofull spyrit from his propre place
Right with the worde/away in poynt to pace
And thus she lyth/with hewes pale and grene
That whylom fresshe and fayrest was to sene

This Troylus that on her gan beholde
Clepyng her name/and she lay as for deed
Withouten answere/ꝛ felte her lymmes colde
Her eyen throwen vpwarde to her heed
This sorouful man/can nowe non other rede
But ofte tyme her colde mouthe he kyste
Where hym was wo/god ꝛ hym selfe it wyste

He ryseth hym vp/ꝛ longe stryght he her leyde
For signe of lyfe/for aught he can or may
Can he none fynde/in nothyng of Creseyde
For whiche his songe sul ofte is wela way
But whan he sawe that speechelesse she lay
With sorouful voyce/ꝛ herte of dlysse al bare
He sayd/ho we she was fro this worlde yfare

So after that he longe had her complayned
His hondes wronge/ꝛ sayd that was to sey
And with his teeres salte her brest betayned
He gan tho teeres wypen of ful oft eye
And pitously gan for the soule preye
And sayd/lorde that set arte in thy trone
Rewe eke on me/for I shal folowe her sone

She colde was/and without sentement
For aught he wote/for brethe sette he none
And this was hym a pregnant argument
That she was forth out of this worlde agone
And whan he sawe there was non other wone
He gan her lymmes dresse/in suche manere
As men don hem that shal ben layde on bere

And after this/with sterne and cruel chere
His swerde anon out of his sheth he twyght
Hym selfe to sleen/ho we sore that hym smert
So that his soule/her soule folowen myght
There as the dome of Minos wolde it myght
Sith loue and cruel fortune it ne wolde
That in this worlde he longer lyuen sholde

Than sayd he thus/full pyde of high disdayne
O cruel Joue/and thou Fortune aduerse
This al and some/that falsely haue ye playne
Creseyde/and sith ye may do me no werse
Fye on your myght and workes so dyuerse
Thus cowardly ye shul me neuer wynne
There shal no dethe me fro my lady twynne

For I this worlde/sith ye haue slayn her thus
Wol lete/and folowe her spyrite lowe or hye
Shal neuer louer sayne that Troylus
Dare nat for feare with his lady dye
For certayne I wol beare her company
But sithe ye wol nat suffre vs lyuen here
Yet suffreth that our soules ben yfere

And thou cyte/in whiche I lyue in wo
And thou Pryam/and brethren al yfere
And thou my Mother/farwel for I go
And Attropos make redy thou my bere
And thou Creseyde/o swete herte dere
Receyue nowe my spirite/wolde he sey
With swerde at herte/al redy for to dey

But

But as god wolde/of swough she abrayde
And gan to syghe/and Troylus she eryde
And he answerde/lady myn Creseyde
I put ye pete: and let this sworde do wne glyde
ye hert myn/ that thanked be Cuppde
(Wd she) and therwithal she forth sygh
And he began to glad her as he myght

Tok her in armes two and syste her ofte
And her to glad/she dyd al his entent
For whiche her goost/that flyttered aye a lofte
Ayen to her wofu hertе ayen it went
But at the laste/as that her eye glent
Aside/ anon she gan his sworde aspye
As it lay bare/and gan for feare crye

And asked him/ why he had it out drawe
And Troylus anon the cause her tolde
And how him selfe therw' he wold haue slawe
For whiche Creseyde vpon him gan beholde
And gan him in her armes faste folde
And sayd/o mercy god/to whiche a dede
Alas/how nyghe we weren bothe dede

Than if I nadde spoken/as grace was
Ye wold haue slayne your selfe anon (q̄ she)
ye douteresse: and she answerde alas
For by that ilke lorde that made me
I nolde a foulonge way on lyue haue be
After your dethe/ to haue ben crowned quene
Of al ꝑ lande the sonne on shyneth shene

But with this selue sworde/whiche ꝑ herte is
Thy selfe I wolde haue slayne (q̄ she) tho
Out ho/for we haue right nough of this
And let vs ryse a strayte to bedde go
And there let vs speken of our wo
For by that morter/ whiche that I se brenne
And we I sul wel/ that day is nat ferre henne.

Whan they were in her bedde in armes folde
Naught was it lyke tho nyghtes here beforne
For ielousy ethe other gan beholde
As they that hadden al her blysse yloste
Dreweyling aye the day that they were borne
Ful at the last/this forouful wight Creseyde
To Troylus these ilke wordes seyde

Lo herte myn/ wel wote ye this (quod she)
That if a wight alway his wo complayne
And seketh nat how we holpen for to be
It nys but folye/and encreace of payne
And sens that here assembled be we twayne
To synde bote of wo that we ben in
It were tyme al soone to begyn

I am a woman/as ful wel ye wotte
And as I am auysed sodainly
So wol I tel you/whyle it is hotte
Me thynketh thus/that neyther ye nor I
Ought halse this wo to maken slyfully
For there is arte ynough for to redresse
That yet is myssе/and sleen this heupnesse

Sothe is/the wo the whiche we ben inne
For aught I wote/ for nothyng els is
But for the cause that we shulde twynne
Conspired al/ there nys no more amys
And what is than a remedye vnto this?
But that we shape vs sone for to mete
This al and some/my derre herte swete

Nowe that I shal wel bringen it aboute
To come ayen/sone after that I go
Therof am I no maner thyng in doute
For dredeleesse/within a weke or two
I shal ben here/and that it may be so
Ye al right/ and in wordes fewe
I shal you wel an heape of wayes shewe

For whiche I wol nat make longe sermon
For tyme ylosse may nat recouered be
But I wol go to my conclusyon
And to the beste/in aught that I can se
And for the lone of god forgeue it me
If I speake aught ayenst your hertes reste
For trewly I spеke it for the beste

Makyng alway a protestacion
That nowe these wordes whiche I shal say
Nys but to shewen you my mocion
To synde vnto our helpe the beste way
And taketh it none otherwyse I pray
For in effecte/ what so ye me cōmaunde
That wol I don/for that is no demaunde

Now herkeneth this/ ye haue wel vnderstōde
Myn goyng graunted is by parlyment
So ferforth ꝑ it maye nat ben withstonde
For al this worlde/as by my iugement
And sithe there helpeth non auysement
To letten it/ lette it passe out of mynde
And sette vs shape a better waye to fynde

The sothe is/ the twynnynge of vs twayne
Wol vs disease/ and cruelly anoye
But him behoueth somtyme haue a payne
That serueth loue/ if that he wol haue ioye
And sith I shal no farther out of Troye
Than I maye ryde ayen on halfe a morowe
It ought lasse causen vs for to sorowe

So as I shal nat so ben hyd in mewe
That day by day/myn owne herte dere
Sens wel ye wote that it is nowe a trewe
Ye shal ful wel al myn estate here
And er that truce is done/ I shal ben here
Than haue ye bothe Antenor ywonne
And me also/bethe glad nowe if ye conne

And thinke right thus/ Creseyde is nowe agon
Lo what/she shal come hastely ayen
And whan alas: by god/ so right anon
Er dayes ten/this dare I safely sayne
And than at erste/shal we be so fayne
So as we shal togythere euer dwell
That al this worlde ne myght our blysse tell

I se that ofte tyme/there as we ben nowe
That for the beste/out counsayle for to hyde
Ye speke nat with me/ nor I with you
In fourtenyght/ne se you go ne ryde
May ye nat ten dayes than abyde
For myn honour/in suche auenture
I wys ye nowe els lyte endure:

Ye knowe ellis how that al my lyf is here
But if that only it my father be
And elle myn other thynges al yfere
And namely my dere herte ye
Whom that I nolde leauen for to se
For al this worlde/as wyde as it hath space
Or els se I neuer Ioues face

Why trowe ye my father in this wyse
Coueyteth so to se me/but for drede
Lest in this towne that folkes me dispyse
Because of him/for his vnhappy dede
What wote my father what lyse that I lede
For if he wyste in Troye howe wel I fare
Vs neded for my wendyng nat to care

ye/ that euery daye ellis more and more
Men treate of peace/and it supposed is
That men the quene Heleyne shal restore
And grekes vs restore that is mys
So though there nere comforte none but this
That men purposen peace on euery syde
Ye may the better at ease of herte abyde

For if that it be peace/myn herte dere
The nature of the peace mote nedes drawe
That men muste entrecomune yfere
And to and fro elle ryde and gone as blyue
Al day as thicke as been flyen from an hyue
And euery wyght haue lyberte to bleue
Where as him lyste/ the bet withouten leue

And though so be ꝑ peace there may be none
Yet hyther/though there neuer peace ne were
I muste come/for whyder shulde I gone
Or howe mischaunce shulde I dwell there
Amonge tho men of armes euer in fere
For whiche/ as wisly god my soule rede
I can nat sene wherof ye shulde drede

Haue here another way/ if it so be
That al this thyng ne may you nat suffyse
Myn father as ye knowen wel parde
Is olde/and elle ful of coueityse
And I right nowe haue founden al the gyse
Withouten nette/ wher with I shal him fenge
And herkeneth nowe/if that ye wol assent

Lo Troylus/ men sayne that ful harde it is
The wolfe ful/ and the wedder hole to haue
This is to sayne/that men ful ofte wyn
Mote spenden parte/ the remenant for to saue
For aye with golde/ men may the herte graue
Of him that set is vpon couetyse
And howe I mene/ I shal it you deuyse

Ere

The mouable/ which that I haue in this toun
Vnto my father shal I take/and saye
That right for trust/and for saluation
I sent is/from a frende of his ouwaye
The whiche frendes feruently him praye
To sende after more/and that in hye
Whyle that this town stant thus in iopardye

And that shal be of golde an huge quantyte
Thus shal I sayne/but leste soone it aspyde
This may be sent by no wight but by me
I shal eke shewen him/if peace betyde
What frendes that I haue on euery syde
Towarde the courte/to done the wrathe pace
Of Priamus/and do him stonde in grace

So what for o thyng and for other swete
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes
That right in heuen his soule is/ shal he mete
For al Apollo/or his clerkes lawes
Or calculyng/auayleth nat thre hawes
Desyre of golde shal so his soule blende
That as me lyst/I shal wel make an ende

And if he wolde aught by his sonte it preue
If that I spe/in certayne I shal sonde
Destourben him/and pluche by the sleue
Makyng his sonte/and beaten him on honde
He hath nat wel the goddes vnderstonde
For goddes speke in amphibologies
And for o sothe/ they tellen twenty lyes

Eke dede sonde first goddes/ I suppose
Thus shal I sayne/s that his couarde herte
Made him ampsse the goddes text to glose
Whan he for ferde out of Delphos sterte
And but I make him sone to conuerte
And done my rede/within a day or tweye
I wol to you oblige me to deye

And trewly/as writtyn wel I synde
That al this thyng was sayd of good entente
And that her herte trewe was and fynde
Towardes him/and spake right as she mente
And ȳ she starfe for wo nigh whan she wente
And was in purpose euer to be trewe
Thus writyn they/that of her werdes knewe

This Troylus/with herte and eares spradde
Herde al this thyng deuysed to and fro
And verily it semed that he had
The selue wytte/but yet to let her go
His herte mysyaue him euer mo
But fynally he gan his herte wreste
To trusten her/and tobe it for the beste

For whiche the great furye of his penaunce
Was queynt w' hope/ & therwith henn bytwene
Began for ioye the amerous daunce
And as the bryde/whan the sonne is shene
Delyten in her songe/in leues grene
Right so the wordes/ that they spake yfere
Delyten hem/and made her hertes clere

But natheleese/the wendyng of Creseyde
For al this worlde may nat out of his mynde
For whiche ful ofte he pytously her preyde
That of her heste he might her trewe synde
And sayd her/certes if ye be vnkynde
And but ye come at day set in Troye
Ne shal I neuer haue heale/honour/ne ioye

For al so sothe as sonne vprysth a morowe
And god so wisely thou me wofull wrecche
To reste bring/out of this cruel sorowe
I wot my seluen slee/if that ye dretche
But of my dethe though lytel be to retche
yet er that ye me causen so to smerte
Dwell rather here myn owne swete herte

For trewly myn owne lady dere
The sleyghtes yet/that I haue herde you stere
Ful shaply ben to fallen al yfere
For thus men sayth/that one thunketh ȳ here
But al another thynketh the federe
Your fire is wyse/ and sayd is out of drede
Men may the wyse out renne/ & nat out rede

It is ful harde to halten vn espyed
Before a crepyll/for he can the crafte
Your father is ful sleyghte as Argus eyed
For al be it that his mouable is him byraste
His olde sleyght is yet so with him laste
Ye shal nat blende him for your womanhede
Ne sayne aright/ and that is al my drede

I wot if peace shal euermo betyde
But peace or no/ for ernest ne for game
I wotte sith Calcas on the grekes syde
Hath ones ben/ and lost so foule his name
He dare no more come here agayne for shame
For whiche that we/ for ought I can espy
To trusten on/ nys but a fantasy

Ye shal eke seen your father shal you glose
To ben a wyfe/ and as he can wel preche
He shal some greke so preyse and wel alose
That rauysshen he shal you with his speche
Or do you done by force/ as he shal teche
And Troylus on whom ye nyl haue routhe
Shal rauseleesse so fieruen in his trouthe

And ouer al this your father shal dispyse
Vs al/ and sayne this cyte nys but lorne
And that thassege neuer shal aryse
For why the grekes haue it al yswore
Tyl we ben slayne/ & down our walles borne
And thus he shal you with his wordes feere
That aye drede I/ that ye wol bleuen there

Ye shal eke sene so many a lusty knyght
Amonge the grekes ful of worthynesse
And eche of hem/ with herte/ wytte/ & myght
To pleasen you/ done al his besynesse
That ye shul dullen of the rudenesse
Of sely Troyane/ but if routhe
Remorde you/ or vertue of your trouthe

And this to me so greuous is to thynke
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende
Ne dredelesse/ in me there may nat synke
O good opinyon/ if that ye wende
For why/ your fathers sleight wol be shende
And if ye gone/ as I haue tolde you yore
So thynke I nam but dead/ withouten more

For which with humble/ trewe/ & pitous herte
A thousande tymes mercy I you pray
So rew with on myn aspre paynes smerte
And dothe somwhat/ as that I shal you say
And let be steale away byt wixt be tway
And thinke ꝑ foly is/ whan a man may chese
For accident/ his substaunce for to lese

I meane thus/ that sens we mowe or day
Wel stelthe away/ and ben to gyther so
What wyt were it to putten in assay
(In case ye shulden to your father go)
If that ye mighten come ayen or no
Thus meane I/ that were a great folye
To put that syker nesse in iopardye

And bulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of treasour may we bothe with be sede
Ynough to lyue in honour and plesaunce
Tyl vnto tyme that we shal ben dede
And thus we may eschewen al this drede
For euery other way ye can recorde
Myn herte y'wis may therwith nat acorde

And hardely ne dredeth no ponerte
For I haue fryn and frendes elswhere
That though we comen in our bare sherte
We shulde neyther lacke golde ne geere
But ben honoured whyle we dwellen there
And go we anon/ for as in myn entent
This is the beste/ if that ye wol assent

Cresseyde with a syghe/ right in this wyse
Answerde: y'wis my derre herte trewe
We may wel steale away/ as ye deuyse
And fynden suche vnthrifty wayes newe
But afterwarde ful sore it wol be rewe
And helpe me god so at my moste nede
As causeles ye suffren al this drede

For thylke day that I for cherisshyng
Or drede of father/ or for any other wight
Or for estate/ delyte/ or for weddyng
Be false to you/ my Troylus my knyght
Saturnus doughter Juno/ thrugh her might
As woode as Achamante do me dwell
Eternally with Sysy in the pyt of hel

And this/ on euery god celestyal
I sweare it you/ and eke on eche goddesse
On euery nymphe/ and deite infernal
On Satyry and Faury more and lesse
That halue goddes ben of wyldernesse
And Attropos my thredes of lyfe to barste
If I be false/ nowe trow me or yf you leste

And

And thou Synope/ that as any arowe cleere
Thorugh Troy rennest/ ay do vnward to ꝑ see
Ye wytnesse of this worde/ that sayd is here
That yfere day that I vntrewe be
To Troylus/ myn owne herte fre
That thou retorne backwarde to thy well
And I with body and soule synke to hell

But that ye spekē away thus for to go
And leten al your frendes/ god forbede
For any woman that ye shulden so
And namely sens Troy hath now suche nede
Of helpe/ and eke of o thyng taketh heede
If this were wyste/ my lyfe lape in balaunce
And yo⁹ honour/ god shilde vs fro mischaūce

And if so be that peace hereafter be take
As al day happeth after angre game
Why lorde the soro we ꝛ wo ye wolden make
That ye ne durst come ayen for shame
And er that ye ieoparden so your name
Deth nat to hasty my this hotte fare
For hasty man ne wanteth neuer rare

What trowe ye the people eke al aboute
Wolde of it sayn: it is ful sygne to arede
They wolden say/ and swere it out of doute
That loue ne drawe you nat to done this dede
Delit lustē voluptuous/ and cowarde drede
Thus were al lost ē y was myn herte dere
Your honour/ whethe that now shyneth clere

And also thynketh me myn honestē
That flouretth yet/ how sholde I shilde it frēde
And with what sythe it spotted shulde be
If in this forme I shulde with you wende
Nē though I ryned vnto the worldes ende
Thy name shulde I neuer a penwarde wynne
Thus were I lost/ and ꝑ were routh ꝛ synne

And for thy/ flee with reason al this here
Then sayne the suffraunt ouerrenneth pardē
Eke who so wol have lese/ he lese mote lete
Thus maketh vertue of necessyte
By patience/ and thynke that lyfe is he
Of fortune ayen that naught wol of her recche
And she ne daunteth no wight but wrecche

And trusteth this/ that certes herte swete
Or Phebus fustere/ Lucina the shene
The Lyon passe/ out of this Arrete
I wol ben here/ without ony wene
I mene/ as helpe me Juno heuens quene
The tenthe day/ but if that dethe me assayle
I wol you sene/ without ony fayle

And now we so this be sothe (quod Troylus)
I shal wel suffre vnto the tenthe day
Sens that I se that nede it mote ben thus
Out for the loue of god/ if it be may
So let vs stealyn prively away
For euer in one/ as for to lyue in reste
Myn herte sayth that it wol be the beste

O mercy god/ what lyfe is this (qꝺ she)
Alas/ ye slee me thus for very tene/
I se wel now we that ye mystrusten me
For by your wordes it is wel sene
Now we for the loue of Scythia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causeles for routhe
Sens to be trewe/ I haue you plight my trouth

And thynketh wel/ that somtyme it is wyt
To spende a tyme/ a tyme for to wynne
Ne parde lorne ony I nat fro you yet
Thogh that we ben a day or two a twynne
Dryue out tho fantasyes you withinne
And trusteth me/ and leaueth eke your sorowe
Or here my trouth/ I wol nat lyue tyl morow

For if ye wyste how sore it dothe me smerte
Ye wolde cesse of this/ for god than woote
The pure spryt wepeth in myn herte
To sene you wepen/ whethe that I loue moste
And that I mote gone vnto the grekes hoste
Ye/ nere it that I wyste a remedye
To come ayen/ right here I wolde dye

But certes I ony nat so nyce a wight
That I ne can ymagynen away
To come ayen that day that I haue hight
For who may holden a thing that wol away
My father naught/ for al his queynte play
And by my thrift/ my wendyng out of Troye
Another day shal turne vs al to ioye

For thy with al myne herte I you beseke
If that you lyste done aught for my prayere
And for the loue whiche that I loue yon eke
That er that I departe fro you here
That of so good a comforte and a chere
I maye you seue/ that ye may bring at rest
Myne herte/ whiche is at poynt to brest

And ouer al this I pray you (qd she) tho
Myne owne hertes sothfaste suffysaunce
Sithe I am thyne al hole withouten mo
That while that I am absent/ no plesaunce
Of other/ do me fro your remembraunce
For I am euer agast/ for why men rede
That loue is thyng aye ful of besy drede

For in this worlde there lyueth lady none
If that ye were untrewe/ as god defende
That so betrayed were/ or wo begone
As I/ that al trouthe in you entende
And doutlesse/ if that iche other wende
I nere but deed/ and er ye cause fynde
For goddes loue/ so beth me naught unkynde

To this answered Troylus/ and seyde
Now god/ to whom there nys no cause y wite
Me glade/ as wys I neuer unto Creseyde
Sithe thylke day I sawe her first with eye
Was false/ ne neuer shal tyl that I dye
At shorte wordes/ wel ye may me leue
I can no more/ it shal be founde at preue

Grauntmercy good herte myne y wis (qd she)
And blysful Venus lette me neuer sterue
Er I may stonde of plesaunce in degre
To quyte him wel/ that so wel can deserue
And while that god my wyt wyl me conserue
I shal so done/ so trewe I haue you founde
That aye honour to me warde shal rebounde

For trusteth wel/ that your estate ropal
Ne veyne delyte/ nor outcry worthynesse
Of you in werre or turnay marcial
Ne pompe/ array/ nobley/ or ek ryalesse
Ne made me to rewe on your destresse
But moralt vertue/ grounded upon trouthe
That was the cause I first had on you routhe

Eke gentyl herte/ and manhede that ye had
And that ye had (as me thought) in despyte
Euery thyng that sowned in to bad
As rudenesse/ and peoplysshe appetyte
And that your reason budded your delyte
This made abouen euery creature
That I was yours/ I shal while I may dure

And this may lengthe of yeres nat fordo
Ne remuable fortune deface
But Jupiter/ that of his mighte may do
The sorousful to be glad/ so yeue vs grace
Er nyghtes ten/ to metyn in this place
So that it may your herte and myn suffyse
And sareth now we wel/ for tyme is that ye ryse

And after that they longe yplayned had
And ofte ykyst/ and strayte in armes folde
The day gan ryse/ and Troylus him clad
And rufully his lady gan beholde
As he that felte dethes care colde
And to her grace he gan him recommaunde
Where he was wo/ this holde I no demaunde

For mannes herte ymagynen ne can
Ne entendement conseyue/ ne tonge tel
The cruell paynes of this sorouful man
That passen euery turment do we in hell
For whan he sawe that she ne myghte dwell
Whiche that his soule out of his herte rente
Withouten more/ out of the chambre he went.

¶ Explicit li. iii. Incipit li. v.

AProchen gan the fatall destyne
That Joues hath in disposicioun
And to you angry Parcas suffryn thre
Commytteth to done execucioun
For whiche Creseyde muste out of the toun
And Troylus shal dwell forthe in pyne
Ful Lachesis his threde no lenger twyne

The galde tresséd Phebus hyghe on lofte
Thryse had al with his beames clere
The snowen moste/ and zephirus as softe
Ydrought aye the tendre lossnes gere
Sens that the sonne of Dertha the quere
Began to loue her first/ for whom his sorowe
Was al/ that she departe shulde a morowe

Ful

Ful redy was at prime Diomede
Criseyde vnto the grekes hoste to leed
For sorow we of whiche/she feleth her herte blede
As she that nyste what was best to reed
And trewly/as myn auctor dooes reed
They wyste neuer woman haue the care
Sin was so lothe out of a towne to fare

This Troylus withouten rede or lore
As may that hath his ioyes eke forlore
Was wayting on his lady euer more
As she that was forthfast croppe and more
Of al his lust or ioyes here tofore
But Troylus now farwel al thy ioye
For shalt thou neuer sene her efte in Troye

Now is/that whyle he bode in this manere
He gan his wo ful manly for to hyde
That wel vnneth it seme was in his chere
But at the yate there she shulde out ryde
With certayne folke he honed her to abyde
So wo bygon/al wolde he nat him playne
That on his horse vnneth he sate for payne

For ire he quoke/so gan his herte gnawe
Whan Diomede on horse gan him dyght
And sayd vnto him false thus y be sawe
Alas (quod he) thus foule a wretchednesse
Why suffre I it: why nyl I it redresse:
Were it nat liet atones for to dye
Than euermore my langour thus to drye:

Why nyl I make at ones ryche and poore
To haue ynough to done er that she go:
Why nyl I bringe al Troye vpon a roore:
Why nyl I slery this Diomede also:
Why nyl I rather with a mayn or two
Stroke her away: why wol I this endure:
Why nyl I helpen to myn owne cure:

But why he nolde done so fel a dede
That shal I sayne/& why him lyste it spare
He had my herte al way a maner drede
Lest that Criseyde/my rumour of this fare
Sholde haue ben slayn/so this was al his care
And eke certayne/nat I sayd pare
He had it done/withouten wordes mare

Criseyde whan she redy was to ryde
Ful sorowfully she sighed/and sayd alas
But soothe she wote/for aught ỹ may betyde
And soothe she rydeth ful sorowfully a pas
There is none other remedye in this caas
What wonder is/though that her sore smerte
Whan she forgothe her owne swete herte

This Troylus in gyse of curtesye
With hauke on honde/& with an huge route
Of knyghtes/rode and dyd her compayne
Passyng al the valey/ferre without
And ferther wolde haue rydden out of doute
Ful sayne/and wo was him to goy so sone
But turne he muste/and it was eke to done

And right with that was Antenor prome
Out of the grekes hoste/and euery wight
Was of him glad/& sayd he was welcome
And Troylus/al nere his herte lyght
He payned him/with al his full myght
Him to with holde of wrpyng at leste
And Antenor he lyste/and made feste

And ther withal he musie his leaue take
And caste his eye vpon her pytously
And nere he rode/his cause for to make
To take her by the honde al soberly
And forde so she gan wepen tenderly
And he ful soft and slyghly gan her sey
No we holde pour day/and do me nat to dey

With that his courser turned he about
With face pale/ and vnto Diomede
No worde he spake/ne none of al his route
Of whiche the sonne of Tideus take hede
As he that couthe more than the crede
In suche a craft/and by the rayne her hente
And Troylus to Troye/ homwardes wente

This Diomede/that ladde her by the bridell
Whan that he sawe the folke of Troye away
Thought/al my labour shal nat dey on pdell
If that I may/for somwhat shal I say
For at the worste/it shonte may our way
I haue herde say eke/tymes twyse twelue
He is a fool that wol forbete him selue

But

But natheleſſe/this thought he wel ynough
That certainly I any aboute naught
If that I ſpeke of loue/or make it tought
For douteleſſe/if ſhe haue in her thought
Hym that I geſſe/he may nat ben ybrought
So ſone away/but I ſhal fynde a meane
That ſhe nat pet wete ſhal what I meane

This Diomede/as he that couthe his gode
Wha this was don/ gan fallen forth in ſpeche
Of this and that/and aſke why ſhe ſtode
In ſuche diſeaſe/ and gan her eke beſeche
That if that he encreaſen might or eche
With any thyng her eaſe/ that ſhe ſholde
Comaunde it hym/and ſayd he don it wolde

For trewly he ſwore her as a knyght
That ther nas thig/wᵗ which he myght her pleſe
That he nolde don his payne/ & al his myght
To don it/for to don her herte an eſe
And prayde her ſhe wolde her ſorowe apeſe
And ſayd/ ywis we grekes can haue ſope
To honouren you/as wel as folke of Troye

He ſayd eke thus/I wot you thinketh ſtraunge
I.o wonder is/for it is to you newe
The acqueyntaunce of theſe tropans to chaunge
For folke of Grece/that ye neuer knewe
But wolde neuer god/but if as trewe
A grete ye ſhulde amonge vs al fynde
As any tropan is/and eke as kynde

And by cauſe I ſwore you right nowe
To ben your frende/and helply to my myght
And for that more acqueyntance eke of you
Haue I had/than another ſtraunger wyght
So fro this forthe/I pray you day & nyght
Comaundeth me/ho we ſore that me ſmerte
To done/al that may lyke vnto your herte

And that ye me wolde/ as your brother treate
And taketh nat my frendſhyp in diſpyte
And though your ſorowes ben for thiges grete
Not I nat why/but out of more reſpyte
Wyn herte hath for to amende it great delyte
And if I may your harmes nat redreſſe
I am right ſory for your heuineſſe

For though ye tropās/with ye grekes wrothe
Haue many a day ben/alway yet parde
O god of loue/in ſothe we ſeruen bothe
And for the loue of god my lady free
Whom ſo ye hate/as bethe nat wroth with me
For trewly there can no wight you ſerue
That halſe ſo lothe your wrath wolde deſerue

And nere it that we ben ſo nere the tent
Of Calcas/ whiche that ſene vs bothe may
I wolde of this you tel al myne entent
But this enſealed tyl another day
yeue me your honde/ I am and ſhal be aye
God helpe me ſo/whyle ỹ my lyfe may dure
Your owne/ abouen euery creature

Thus ſaid I neuer er no we to woman ſome
For god myne herte as wiſely glade ſo
I loued neuer woman here before me
As paramours/ ne neuer ſhal no mo
And for the loue of god be nat my foe
Al can I nat to you my lady dere
Complayne aright/ for I am pet to lere

And wōdreth nought myne owne lady bright
Though ỹ I ſpeke of loue to you thus blyue
For I haue herde or this of many a wight
Hath loued thynge he neuer ſawe his lyue
Eke I am nat of power for to ſtryue
Againſt the god of Loue/but hym obey
I wol alwaye/ and mercy I you prey

There beth ſo worthy knyghtes in this place
And ye ſo fayre/ that euerieche of hem al
Wol payne hym to ſtonden in your grace
But myght me ſo fayre a grace fal
That ye me for your ſeruaunt wolde cal
So ſoftly/ne ſo trewly can ne ſerue
Nyl none of hem/ as I ſhal tyl I ſterue

Creſeyde vnto that purpoſe lyte anſwerde
As ſhe that was with ſorowe oppreſſed ſo
That in effaite ſhe naught his tales herde
But here & there/ no we here a worde or two
Her thought her ſorouful herte braſt a two
For whan ſhe gan her father ferre eſpye
Wel nyghe do wne of her horſe ſhe gan to lye

But

But natheleſſe ſhe thonketh Diomede
Of al his trauayle and his good chere
And that him lyſte his frendeſhyp to her bede
And ſhe accepteth it in good manere
And wol do ſayne that is him leſe and dere
And truſten him ſhe wolde/and wel ſhe mught
Is ſayd ſhe/and from her horſe ſhe alyght

Her father hath her in his armes nome
And ſwety tymes he kyſſe his doughter ſwete
And ſayd: o dere doughter myn welcome
She ſaid eke/ſhe was ſayne with him to mete
And ſtode forthe muet/myldē/ and manſuete
But here I leaue her with her father d'well
And forthe I wol of Troylus you tell

To Troye is come this woful Troylus
In ſorowe abouen al ſorowes ſmerte
With ſelen loſe/ and face diſpytous
Tho ſodainly do wne from his horſe he ſterte
And thrungh his paleys with a ſwolne herte
To chambre he went/of nothyng toke he hede
Ne none to him dare ſpeke o worde for drede

And there his ſorowes that he ſparred had
He pane an iſſue large/and bethe he cryde
And in his thowes/ frenetyke and mad
He curſeth Juno/ Apollo/ and eke Cupide
He curſeth Bachus/ Ceres/ and Cypride
His byrthe/him ſelfe/his fate/ and eke nature
And ſaue his lady/ euery creature

To bed he gothe/and weyleth there a turneth
In ſurye/as bothe he Jxion in hell
And in this wyſe he nygh tyl day ſoiourneth
But tho began his herte alyte vnſwell
Throngh terres/ whiche that gonen vp to wel
And pitouſly he cryed vpon Creſeyde
And to him ſelfe right thus he ſpake & ſeyde

Where is myn owne lady lefe and dere?
Where is her whyte barſt/ where is it where?
Where ben her armes/and her eyen clere
That yeſterday this tyme with me were?
Nowe may I wepe alone many a tere
And graſpe aboute I may/but in this place
Fonde a ſyſowe/ I fynde naught to embrace

How ſhal I don whan ſhal ſhe come agayn?
I not alas/why lette I her go?
As wolde god I had as tho be ſlayn
O herte myn Creſeyde/O ſwete fo
O lady myn/that I loue and no mo
To whom for euer more myn herte I dowe
Se howe I dye/ pe nyl me nat reſcowe

Who ſeeth you nowe/my right lode ſterre?
Who ſytteth right nowe in your preſence?
Who can comforten nowe your hertes werre
Nowe I am gon/whom yeue ye audyence:
Who ſpeketh for me right nowe in your abſence
Alas no wight/and that is al my care
For wel wote I/as yuel as I ye fare

Howe ſhulde I thus ten dayes ful endure
Whan I the firſt nyght haue al this tene
Howe ſhal ſhe eke ſorouful creature
For tendrenesſe/howe ſhal ſhe this ſuſtene
Suche wo for me/o pytous/pale/& grene
Shal ben your freſſhe womanly face
For langour er ye turne vnto this place

And whan he ſyl in any ſlombrynges
Anon begynne he ſhulde for to grone
And dreamen of the dredfulleſt thynges
That might ben/as mete he were alone
In place horryble/mabynig aye his mone
Dr meten that he was amonges all
His enemyes/and in her hondes fall

And therwithal his body ſhulde ſterte
And with the ſterte al ſodainly awake
And ſuche a tremour ſete aboute his herte
That of the feare his body ſhulde quake
And therwithal he ſhulde a noyſe make
And ſeme as though he ſhulde fall depe
From hygh aloſte/ and than he wolde wepe

And rewen on him ſelfe ſo pitouſly
That wonder was to here his fantaſye
Another tyme he ſhulde mightely
Comforte hym ſelfe/and ſayne it was folye
So cauſeleſſe/ſuche drede for to drie
And eſte begyn his aſpre ſorowes newe
That euery man mught on his payues rewe

Who

Who coulde tel al/or fully discryue
His wo/his playnt/his langour/& his pyne
Nat al the men that han or ben on lyue
Thou reder mayste thy selfe ful wel deuyne
That suche a wo my wyt can nat defyne
Dy pdel for to write it shulde I swynke
Whan that my wyt is werry it to thynke

Dy heuen yet the sterres weren sene
Although ful pale ywoxen was the moone
And whyten gan the orisonte shene
Al ceste warde/as it is wonte to doone
And Phebus with his rosy carte soone
Gan after that to dresse him vp to fare
Whan Troylus hath sent after Pandare

This Pandare/that of al the day before
Ne might hym comen this Troylus to se
Al though he on his herd it had swore
For with the kyng Priam alday was he
So that it lay nat in his lyberte
To where to gon/but on the morowe he went
To Troylus/whan that he for him sent

For in his herte he coulde wel deuyne
That Troylus al night for sorowe woke
And that he wolde tel him of his pyne
This knewe he wel ynough without boke
For whiche to chambre streight ỳ way he toke
And Troylus tho soberly he grette
And on the bed ful sone he gan hym sette

Dy Pandarus (qd Troylus) the sorowe
Whiche that I drye/I may nat longe endure
I trowe I shal nat lyuen tyl to morowe
For whiche I wolde alwayes on auenture
To the deuysen of my sepoulture
The forme/and of my mouable thou dispone
Right as the semeth best is for to done

But of the fyre and flambe funerall
In whiche my body brennen shal to glede
And of the ferst and playes palestrall
At my vigyle/I pray the take good hede
That that be wel/and offre Mars my stede
Dy swerde/myn helme/& leue brother dere
Dy shelde to Pallas yeue/that shyneth clere

The poudre/l ỳwhich myn herte inwyde shal turn
That pray I the thou take/and it conserue
In a vessal that men clepeth an vrne
Of golde/and to my lady that I serue
For loue of whome thus pytously I sterue
Do yeue it her/and do me thus plesaunce
To prayen her to kepe it for a remembraunce

For wel I fele by my maladye
And by my dreames/now and youre ago
Al certainly/that I mote nedes dye
The oule ere/whiche that hyght Ascaphylo
Hath after me shuyght al these nightes two
And god Mercury/now of me wofal wretche
The soule gyde/and whan the lyst it fetche

Pandare answerde/and sayd Troylus
Dy dere frende/as I haue tolde the yore
That it is folye for to sorowen thus
And causeleesse/for whiche I can no more
But who so wol nat trowen rede me loure
I can nat sene in hym no remedye
But let hym worchen with his fantasye

But Troylus I pray the tel me now
If that thou trowest this that any wight
Hath loued paramours as wel as thou
Ye god wot/and fro many a worthy knyght
Hath his lady gon a fourtenyght
And he nat yet made halfendele the fare
What nede is the to maken al this care?

Sens day by day thou mayste thy selfe se
That from hir loue/or elis from his wyfe
A man mote thynumery of nereslyfe
Pe/though he loue her as his owne lyfe
Yet nyl he with him selfe thus maken stryfe
For wel thou wost my leue brother dere
That alway frendes may nat ben yfere

How we doy this folke/ỳ sene her lones wedded
Dy frendes might: as it betydeth ful ofte
And sene hem in her spousen bed ybedded
God wote they take it wisely fayre and softe
For why/good hope halt vp her herte a lofte
And for they can a tyme of sorowe endure
As tyme hem hurteth/a tyme doth hem cure

To

So shaldest thou endure/and lette slyde
The tyme/and sonde to ben glad and lyght
Ley dapes nye nat so longe to abyde
And sens she to comen the hath behyght
She nyl her beste bidden for no wyght
For drede the nat/that she nyl synde way
To come ayen/my lyse that durst I lay

Thy swenenes ebe/and al suche fantasye
Dime out/and let hem faren to mischaunce
For they procede of thy melancolye
That dothe the sele in slepe al this penaunce
A straw for al swenenes signifiaunce
God helpe me so/I counte hem nat aberne
That wot no man aright what dremes meene

For prestes of the temple tellen this
That dreames ben the revelations
Of goddes/and also wel they tell plus
That they ben infernales illusyons
And leches sayne/that of complections
Procedeth they of faste/or glotonye
Who wot in sothe thus what they signifye

Ek other sayne/that through impressyons
As if a wight hath faste a thyng in mynde
That therof cometh suche auysions
And other sayne/as they in bokes synde
That after tymes of the yere by synde
They dreame/& that effect gothe by ỳ moone
But sone no dreame/for it is nat to doone

Wel worthe of dremes aye these olde wyues
And trewly ebe/augurye of these foules
For feare of which/men weneth lese her lyues
As rennes quaily/or schuching of these oules
To trowen on it/bothe false and foule is
Alas alas/that so noble a creature
As a man/shulde drede suche aduerse

For whiche with al myn herte I the beseche
Unto thy selfe/that al this thou forsyne
And rise no we vp/withouten more speche
And let vs rasl how we forth may best ise dymen
The tyme/& ese how we fresshly we may lyuen
Whan she cometh/the which shal be right sone
God helpe me so/the beste is thus to done

Ryse/let vs speke of lusty lyse in Troye
That we haue lad/and forthe the tyme dryue
And ese of tyme comyng vs treuye
That bringen shal our vlysse nowe so blyue
And langour of these twyse dayes fyue
We shal therwith so forget or oppresse
That wel vnneth it don shal vs duresse

This towne is ful of lordes al aboute
And trewe lasten al this meane whyle
So we playen vs in some lusty route
To Sarpedon/nat hence but a myle
And thus thou shalte the tyme wel begyle
And dryue it forth/vnto that blyssful morowe
That thou her se/that cause is of thy sorowe

Nowe ryse my derre brother Troylus
For certes it non honour is to the
To wepe/and in thy bedde to rouken thus
For trewly of o thyng trust to me
If thou thus lygge/a day/two or thre
The folke wol wene/that thou for cowardyse
The fayneste syke/& that thou darste nat ryse

This Troylus answerde: o brother derre
This knowen folke that haue ysuffred payne
That though he wepe/& make sorouful chere
That feleth harme and smert in euery vayne
No wonder is/and though I euer playne
Or alway wepe/I am nothyng to blame
Sens ỳ I haue lost/the cause of al my game

But sens of fyne force I mote aryse
I shal aryse/as sone as euer I may
And god/to whom myn herte I sacrifyse
So sende vs hastely the tenthe day
For was there neuer foule so fayne of May
As I shal ben/whan that she cometh in Troy
That cause is of my turment and my ioy

But whyder is thy rede (quod Troylus)
That we may play vs best in al this towne
Ey god my counsayle is (quod Pandarus)
To ryde and play vs with kyng Sarpedoun
So longe of this they spellen vp and doun
Tyl Troylus gan at the laste assente
To ryse/& forthe to Sarpedon they wente

This

This Sarpedon/as he that honourable
Was euer his lyue/and ful of hye prowesse
With al that myght yserued ben on table
That deyntie was/al coste it great rychesse
He sedde hem day by day/that suche noblesse
As sayden bothe the moste and eke the leest
Was neuer er that day wyste at any feest

Nor in this worlde there is none instrument
Delycious/throughwynde or touche on corde
As ferre as any wight hath euer ywent
That tonge tell/or herte may recorde
But at that feest/it nas wel herde recorde
Ne of ladyes eke so fayre a companye
On daunce er tho/was neuer yfene with eye

But what anayleth this to Troylus
That for his sorowe/nothyng of it raught
But euer in one/as herte pytous
Ful besily Cresepde his lady sought
On her was euer al that his herte thought
Nowe this nowe that/so faste ymagynyng
That glad iwys can hym no festyng

These ladyes eke/that at this feest ben
Sens that he sawe his lady was awey
It was his sorowe vpon hem for to seen
Or for to here on instrumentes play
For she that of his herte hath the key
Was absent/so this was his fantasye
That no wight shulde maken melodye

Nor there nas houre in al the day or nyght
Whan he was ther as no man myght him here
That he ne sayd/o louesom lady bright
Howe haue ye faren sens that ye were there
Welcome ywis myn owne lady dere
But welawey/al this nas but a mase
Fortune his houe/entended bet to glase

The letters eke/that she of olde tyme
Had hym ysent/he wolde alone rede
An hundred sythe/at wynt noone and prime
Refygurynge her shappe/& her womanhede
Within his herte/and euery worde and dede
That passed was/& thus he droue to an ende
The fourthe day/and sayd he wol wende

And seyd leue brother Pandarus
Intendest thou that we shal here bleue
Tyl Sarpedon wol forthe conueyen vs
Yet were it sayer that we toke our leue
For goddes loue/let vs nowe sone at eue
Our leaue take/and homwarde let vs turne
For trewly I nyl nat thus sojourne

Pandare answerde/be we comen hyther
To fetchen fyre/and rennen home agayne
God helpe me so/I can nat telleu whyther
We myght gone/if I shal sothly sayne
Here any wight is of vs more sayne
Than Sarpedon/and if we hence hye
Thus sodaunly/I holde it vilanye

Whan that we sayden we wolde bleue
With hym a weke/and nowe thus sodaunly
The fourthe day/to take of hym our leue
He wolde wondren on it trewly
Let vs holden forthe our purpose fermely
And sens that ye behyghten hym to abyde
Holde forwarde now/& after let vs ryde

This Pandarus/with al pyne and wo
Made him to dwell/and at the weekes ende
Of Sarpedon they toke her leaue tho
And on her way they spedden hem to wende
(Quod Troylus) nowe lorde me graunt sende
That I may fynde at myn home comyng
Cresepde comen/and therwith gan he synge

Pandare answerde thought this Pandare
And to him selfe ful softely he seyde
God wote resroyden may this hotte fare
Er Calkas sende Troylus Cresepde
But natheless he iaped thus and seyde
And swore ywis/his herte him wel beliefe
She wolde come/as sone as euer she myght

Whan they vnto the palayes were comen
Of Troylus/they doune of horse alyght
And to ȳ chambre/her way haue they nomen
And vnto tyme that it gan to nyght
They spoken of Cresepde the lady bright
And after this/whan hem bothe leste
They spedde hem fro the supper vnto reste

Pp

On morowe/as sone as day began to clere
This Troylus gan of his slepe to awhyde
And to Pandarus his owne brother dere
For loue of god/ful pitously he seyde
As go we fene the paleys of Creseyde
For fens we yet may haue no more reste
So let vs fene her paleys at the leste

And therwithal his meyne for to blende
A cause he fonde in towne for to go
And to Creseydes house they gon wende
But lorde thus sely Troylus was wo
Hym thought his sorouful herte brafte a two
For whan he sawe her doores sperred all
Wel nygh for sorowe adowne he gan to fal

Therwith whan he was ware/ I gan beholde
How shet was euery wyndowe of the place
As frost hym thought his herte gan to colde
For whiche with chaunged deedly pale face
Withouten worde/he fouhe by gan to pace
And as god welde/he gan so faste ryde
That no wight of his countenaunce aspyde

Than sayd he thus/o paleys desolate
O house of houses/whylom best yhight
O paleys empty and disconsolate
O thou lanterne/of which queynt is the light
O paleys/whylom day that nowe arte night
Wel oughteste thou to fall/and I to dye
Sens she is went/ that wonte was vs to gye

O paleys/whylom crowne of houses all
Enlumyned with sonne of al blysse
O ryngе/ of whiche the rubie is out fall
O cause of wo/that cause haste ben of blysse
Yet sens I may no bet/ fayne wolde I blysse
Thy colde doores/durste I for this route
And farwel shrine/of whiche the sayut is out

Therwith he caste on Pandarus his eye
With chaunged face/and pytous to beholde
And whan he might his tyme aright aspye
Ayen as he rode/to Pandarus he tolde
His newe sorowe/and eke his ioyes olde
So pitously/and with so dedly hewe
That euery wight/might on his sorowe rewe

Fro thence forthe he rydeth vp and downe
And euery thyng came hym to remembraunce
As he rode forthe by the places of the towne
In whiche he whylom had al his plesaunce
Lo/ponder sawe I myn owne lady daunce
And in that temple with her eyen clere
We caught first my right lady dere

And ponder haue I herde ful lustely
My dere herte laugh/and ponder play
Sawe I her ones eke ful blysfully
And ponder ones to me gan she say
Nowe good swete/loue me wel I pray
And ponde so goodly gan she me beholde
That to the dethe myn herte is to her holde

And at the corner in the ponder house
Herde I myn alderlieueste lady dere
So womanly/with voyce melodyouse
Synge so wel/so goodly and so clere
That in my soule yet me thynketh I here
The blysful sowne/and in that ponder place
My lady first me tooke vnto her grace

Than thought he thus/o blisful lorde Cupide
Whan I the processe haue in memorie
How me thou me haste werped vn euery syde
Wel might a boke make of it lyke a storie
What nede is the to seke on me victorie
Sens I am thyn/and holy at thy wyll
What ioye hast thou thyn owne folke to spyll

Wel haste thou lorde ywroke on me thyn yre
Thou mighty god/and dredeful for to greue
Nowe mercy lorde/thou wost wel I desyre
Thy grace moste/of al lustes leue
And syue and dye I wol in thy beleue
For whiche I me asse in guerdon but a boone
That thou Creseyde ayen me sende soone

Distrayne her herte as faste to returne
As thou doest myn to longen her to se
Than wote I wel that she nyl nat sojourne
Nowe blysful lorde/so cruell thou ne be
Vnto the blonde of Troye/I pray the
As Juno was vnto the blonde Thebane
For which ye folke of Thebes caught her bane

And after this he to the yates wente
There as Creseyde out rode/ a ful good paas
And vp & downe there made he many a wete
And to hym selfe ful ofte he sayd alas
Fro hence rode my blysse and my solas
As wolde blyssful god nowe for his ioye
I might her sene ayen come to Troye

And to the yonder hyll I gan her gyde
Alas/and there I tobe of her my leue
And yonde I sawe her to her father ryde
For sorowe of whiche myn herte shal to cleue
And hyther home I come whan it was eue
And here I dwell/ out caste from al ioye
And shal/tyl I may sene her este in Troye

And of hym selfe ymagyned he ofte
To ben defayted/ pale/ and woxen lesse
Than he was wonte/& that men sayden softe
What may it be: who can the sothe gesse
Why Troylus hath al this heynesse
And al this nas but his melancolye
That he had of hym selfe suche fantasye

Another tyme ymagynen he wolde
That euery wight that went by the wey
Had of hym routhe/ & that they sayne sholde
I am right sory/ Troylus wol dey
And thus he droue a day yet forthe or tweye
As ye haue herde/ suche lyfe gan he lede
As he that stode bytwixen hope and drede

For whiche hym lyked in his songes shewe
Thencheson of his wo/as he best might
And made a songe/of wordes but a fewe
Somwhat his wofful herte for to lyght
And whan he was from euery mannes sight
With softe voyce/he of his lady dere
That absent was/ gan synge as ye may here

O fierce/ of whiche I lost haue al the lyght
With herte sore/ wel ought I to bewayle
That euer derke in turment/ nyght by nyght
Towarde my deth/ with wynde I fiere & fayle
For whiche the tenthe nyght/ as that I fayle
The gydyng of thy beames bright an houre
Wyl shyp and me Lacrydes wol devoure

This songe whan he thus songen had soone
He syl eyen in to his syghes olde
And euery nyght/ as was his wonte to doone
He stode the bright moone to beholde
And al his sorowe he to the moone tolde
And sayd/ywis whan thou arte horned newe
I shal be glad/ yf al the worlde be trewe

I sawe thyn hornes olde ebe by the morowe
Whan hence rode my right lady dere
That cause is of my turment and my sorowe
For whiche/ o bright Lucyna the clere
For loue of god ren faste about thy spere
For whan thyn hornes newe gynnen springe
Than shal she come & may my blysse bringe

The day is more/ and lenger euery nyght
Than they ben wonte to be/hym thought tho
And that the sonne went his course vnright
Hy lenger way than it was wonte to go
And sayd/ywis I drede me euer mo
The Sonnes sonne Phiton be on lyue
And that his fathers carte amysse he dryue

Vpon the walles faste ebe wolde he walke
And on the grekes hoste he wolde se
And to hym selfe right thus he wolde talke
Lo/ yonder is myn owne lady free
Or elis yonder/ there the tentes be
And thence cometh this ayre that is so soote
That in my soule I fele it dothe me boote

And hardely this wynde that more and more
Thus stoundmele encreaseth in my face
Is of my ladyes depe syghes sore
I preue it thus/ for in none other place
Of al this towne/ saue only in this place
Fele I no wynde/ that sothely so hyhe payne
It saythe alas/ why twynned be we twayne

This longe tyme he dryueth forthe right thus
Tyl fully passed was the nynthe nyght
And aye bespe hym was this Pandarus
That besyly dyd al his full myght
Him to comforte/ and make his herte lyght
Pevyng hym hope al way the tenthe morowe
That she shal comen/ & fynden al his sorowe

Upon

Upon that other syde ese was Creseyde
With wommen fewe/ amonge the grekes stondge
For whiche ful ofte a day/ alas she seyde
That I was borne/ wel may myn herte longe
After my dethe/ for nowe lyue I to longe
Alas/ and I me may it nat amende
For nowe is worse than euer yet I wende

My father nyl for nothyng do me grete
To gone ayen/ for aught I can him queme
And if so be/ that I my terme sete
My Troylus shal in his herte deme
That I am false/ & so it may wel seme
Thus shal I haue vnthonke on euery syde
That I was borne so wela way the tyde

And if that I me put in iopardye
To steale away by nyght/ and it befall
That I be caught/ I shal be holde a spye
Or els so/ this drede I moste of all
Or in the hondes of some wretche I fall
I nam but lorne/ al be myn herte trewe
Lo we mighty god/ thou on my sorowe rewe

Ful pale I wopen was her bright face
Her ipnumes leane/ as she that al the day
Stode whan she durst/ & losed on the place
There she was borne/ and dwelt had aye
And al the nyght wepyng alas she lay
And thus dispayred out of al cure
She ladde her lyfe/ this wofu creature

Ful ofte a day she syghed ese for distresse
And in her selfe she went aye purtrayeng
Of Troylus the great worthynesse
And al his goodly wordes recordyng
Sens first that day her loue began to spring
And thus she sette her wofu herte a fyre
Through remembrance of that she gan desyre

In al this worlde there nys so cruel herte
That her had herde complaynen in her sorow
That nolde haue wepten for her paynes smert
So tenderly she wepte/ bothe eue & morowe
Her neded no teeres for to borowe
And thus was yet the worste of al her payne
Ther was no wight/ to whom she durst playne

Ful rewfully she losed vpon Troye
Dehelde the towres hygh/ and eke the halles
Alas (quod she) the pleasaunce and the ioye
The whiche that nowe al turned in to galles
Haue I had ofte/ within ponder walles
O Troylus/ what dost thou nowe she seyde
Lord whether thou yet thynke vpon Creseyde

Alas/ that I ne had prowed on your sore
And went with you/ as ye me redde er this
Than had I nowe nat syghed halfe so sore
Who might haue sayd/ that I had done amys
To steale away with suche one as he is
But al to late cometh the lechcraft
Whan men the corse vnto the graue carye

To late is nowe to speke of that matere
Prudence alas/ one of thyn eyen thre
We lacked al way/ er that I came here
For oon tyme passed wel remembred me
And present tyme eke could I wel se
But future tyme/ er I was in the snare
Could I nat sene/ that causeth nowe my care

But natheles/ betyde what betyde
I shal to morowe at nyght/ by erst or west
Out of this hoste steale/ on some syde
And gone with Troylus/ where as him lest
This purpose wol I holde/ and this is best
No force of wicked tonges ianglerye
For euer on loue/ haue wretches had enuye

For who so wol of euery worde take hede
Or rulen him by euery wyghtes wyt
He shal he neuer thriuen out of drede
For that that some men blamen euer yet
Lo/ other manere folke comenden it
And as for me/ for al suche varyaunce
Felpcate clepe I my suffysaunce

For whiche/ without any wordes mo
To Troy I wol/ as for conclusioun
But god it wot/ er fully monthes two
She was ful ferre fro that entencioun
For bothe Troylus and Troye toun
Shal vnotlesse throughout her herte slyde
For she wol take a purpose for to abyde

This Diomede/ of whom you tel I gan
Gothe nowe within him selfe aye arguyng
With al the sleight and al that euer he can
Howe he maye best with shortest tarpeng
In to his nette Cresydes herte bryng
To this entente he routhe neuer fyne
To fysshen her/ he layde out hoke and lyne

But natheles/ wel in his herte he thought
That she nas nat without a loue in Trope
For neuer sithen he her thens brought
Ne couthe he sene her laugh/ or maken iope
He nyst howe best her herte for tacope
But for tassey/ he sayde naught it ne greueth
For he that naught assayeth nauzt atcheueth

Yet sayd he to him selfe vpon a nyght
Nowe am I nat a fole/ that wote wel howe
Her wo is/ for loue of another wyght
And her vpon to gon assaye her nowe
I maye wel wete/ it nyl nat ben my prowe
For wyse folke in bookes it expresse
Men shal nat wowe a wight in heupnesse

But who so mpght wynnen suche a floure
Fro him/ for whō she mourneth night & daye
He mpght sayne he were a conquerour
And right anone/ as he that bolde was aye
Thought in his hert/ happe howe happe may
Al shulde I dye/ I wol her hert seche
I shal no more lesen but my speche

This Diomede/ as bookes vs declare
Was in his nedes prest and coragious
With sterne voice/ & mighty lymmes square
Hardy/ testyfe/ stronge/ and cheualrous
Of dedes lyke his father Tydeus
And some men sayne/ he was of tonge large
And heire he was/ of Calcidony and Arge

Cresyde meane was of her stature
Therto of shappe/ of face/ and eke of chere
There mpght ben no fayrer creature
And ofte tyme this was her manere
To gone pressed with her heres clere
Downe by her colere/ at her backe behynde
Which with a threde of golde she wolde bynde

And sauf her browes ioyned yfere
There nas no lacke/ in aught I can espyen
But for to speken of her eyen clere
Lo/ trewly they wotten that her seyen
That paradys stode formed in her eyen
And with her eyghe beaute euer more
Strook loue in her/ ay which of hē was more

She sobre was eke/ symple/ and wyse withal
The beste ynoursshed eke that mught be
And goodly of her speche in general
Charytable/ estately/ lusty/ and free
Ne neuer more ne lacked her pyte
Tendre herted/ slydyng of corage
But trewly I can nat tell her age

And Troylus wel wayen was in bpght
And complete formed by proporcioun
So wel/ that vnde it naught amenden mygbt
Ponge/ fresshe/ stronge/ and hardy as lyoun
Trewe as stele/ in eche condpcioun
One of the beste entetched creature
That is or shal/ whyle ỳ the worlde may dure

And certainly/ in story as I it fonde
That Troylus was neuer vnto no wight
As in his tyme/ in no degre seconde
In daryng da/ that longeth to a bnyght
Al might a gpaunt passen him of mpght
His herte aye with the first and with the beste
Stode peregal to dare done what him leste

But for to tellen forthe of Diomede
It fyl/ that after on the tenthe day
Sens that Cresyde out of the cyte yede
This Diomede/ as fresh as bridale in May
Came to the tente there as Calkas lay
And sayned him with Calkas haue to doone
But what he mente/ I shal you tellen soone

Cresyde at shorte wordes for to tell
Welcomed him/ & downe him by her sette
And he was eche ynough to make dwell
And after this/ withoutē longe lette
The spyces and the wyne men forth fette
And forthe they spake of this and that yfere
As frendes done/ of whiche some shal ye here

He

He gan first falley of the werre in sperhe
Det wyppen hem and the folke of Trope toun
And of thassiege he gan eke her beserhe
To tellen hun what was her opunyoun
fro that demaunde he so descenderh doun
To assen her/if that her straunge thought
The grekes gyse/ & werkes that they wrought

And why her father tarryeth so longe
To wedden her vnto some worthy wight
Cresepde that was in her paynes stronge
For loue of Troylus her owne knyght
So ferforthe as she connyng had or mught
Answerde hun tho/but as of his entente
It semed nat she wyste what he mente

Dut natheleste this yll Diomede
Gan on hun selfe assure/ & thus he seyde
If I aright haue taken on you hede
Me thynketh thus/o lady myn Cresepde
That sens I first honde on your bridel leyde
Whan ye out came of Trope by the morowe
Ne mught I neuer sene you but in sorowe

I can nat sayne what may the cause be
Dut if for loue of some tropan it were
The whiche right sore wolde athynken me
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there
Shulden spyll a quarter of a teere
Or pitously your selues so begyle
For dredelesse it is nat worthe the whyle

The folke of Trope/as who sayth al & some
In prison ben/as ye your selues se
fro thence shal nat one on lyue come
For al the golde at wynnen sonne and see
Knoweth wel/and vnderstondeth me
There shal nat one to mercy gone on lyue
Al were he lorde of worldes twyse lyue

Suche wreche on hem for fetching of Helayne
There shal be taken/er that we hence wende
That Wawes/ which ye goddes ben of peyne
Shal ben agast that grekes wol hem shende
And men shal drede vnto the worldes ende
from hence forthe/to ravysshen any quene
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene

And but if Calkas lede be with ambages
That is to sayne/with double wordes slye
Such as men clepen a worde w' two visages
Ye shal wel knowen that I nat ne lye
And al this thyng right sene it with your eye
And that anon/ ye nyl nat trowe how soone
Now we tabeth hede/for it is for to doone

What wene ye your wyse father wolde
Haue yeuen Antenor for you anon
If he ne wyste that the cyte shulde
Distroyed ben? why nay so mote I gone
He knewe ful wel there shal nat scapen one
That Tropan is/and for the great feere
He durste nat that ye dwelte lenger there

What wol ye more/o louesom lady dere
Let Trope and tropans fro your herte pace
Dune out ỳ bytter hope/ & make good chere
And clepe ayen the beautie of your face
That ye with salte teeres so deface
For Trope is brought in suche a ieopardye
That it to saue is now we no remedye

And thynketh wel/ye shal in grekes fynde
A more parfyte loue/er it be nyght
Than any tropan is/and more ỳnde
And bet to seruen you wol don his might
And if ye vouchsafe my lady bright
I wol ben he/to seruen you my selue
Ye leauer than be lorde of Greces twelue

And with that worde he gan to waxen reed
And in his speche/ a lytel while he quoke
And caste aside a lytel with his heed
And stynte a whyle/ and afterwarde he woke
And sobrely on her he threwe his loke
And sayd I am/al be it to you no ioye
As gentyl a man/as any wight in Trope

For if my father Tydeus/he seyde
Alyued had/I had ben er this
Of Calcidony and Arge a kyng Cresepde
And so hope I that I shal be yuus
Dut he was slayne alas/the more harme is
Vnhappely at Thebes al to rathe
Polympte/and many a man to scathe

But herte myne/ sithe that I am your may
And ben the first/ of whom I serche grace
To serue you as hertely as I can
And euer shal while I to lyue haue space
So that/ er I departe out of this place
Ye wol me graunt that I maye to morowe
At better layser tel you of my sorowe

What shulde I tel his wordes that he seyde?
He spake ynough for o day at the mest
It pitieth wel he spake so/ that Cresyde
Graunted on the morowe at his request
For to speke with him at the lest
So that he nolde speke of suche matere
And thus she to him sayd/ as ye mowe here

As she that had her herte on Troylus
So fast/ that there may it none arace
And straungely she spake/ and sayd thus
O Diomede/ I loue that ilke place
There I was borne/ and Ioues for thy grace
Delyuer it soone of al that dothe it care
God for thy myght so leue it wel to fare

That grekes wold her wrath on Troy wreke
If that they myght I knowe it wel ywis
But it shal naught befallen as ye speke
And god to forne/ and farther ouer this
I wote my father wyse and redy is
And that he me hath bought/ as ye me tolde
So dere I am the more vnto him holde

That grekes ben of high condition
I wotte eke wel/ but certayne men shal fynde
As worthy folke within Troy toun
As conning/ as parfyte/ and as fynde
As ben betwixt Dreades and Inde
And that ye conde wel your lady serue
I trowe eke wel/ her thonke for to deserue

But as to speke of loue/ ywis she seyde
I had a lorde/ to whom I wedded was
The whose myn herte was al tyl he deyde
And other loue/ as helpe me nowe Pallas
There in myn herte nys/ ne neuer was
And that ye ben of noble and high entrede
I haue wel herde it tellen out of dede

And that dothe me to haue so great a wonder
That ye wol fonden any woman so
Eke god wote/ loue and I ben fer asonder
I am disposed bet so mote I go
Vnto my dethe playne and make wo
What I shal after done/ I can nat say
But trewly as yet me lyst nat play

Myn herte is nowe in trybulation
And ye in armes besy day by day
Herafter whan ye wonnen haue the toun
Peraunture than/ so it happen may
That whan I se that I neuer ere say
Than wol I werke that I neuer ere wrought
This worde to you ynough suffyseth ought

To morowe eke wol I speken with you fayne
So that ye tourbey naught of this matere
And whan you lyst/ ye may come here agayn
And er ye gon/ thus mocche I say you here
As helpe me Pallas/ with her heeres clere
If that I shulde of any greke haue routhe
It shulde be your selues by my trouthe

I say nat therfore that I wol you loue
Ne say nat nay/ but in conclusyoun
I meane wel by god that syt aboue
And therwithal she caste her eyen doun
And gan to sigh a said/ Troilus a Troy toun
Yet bydde I god/ in quyete and in reste
I may you serue/ or do myn herte breste

But in effecte/ and shortly for to saye
This Diomede al fresshly newe agayne
Gan pressen on/ and caste her mercy praye
And after this the sothe for to sayne
Her gloue he tok/ of whiche he was ful fayne
And fynally/ whan it was woxen eue
And al was wel/ he rose and tok his leue

The bright Venus folowed and ay taught
The way there brode Phebus down was alight
And Lythera her chare horse ouer raught
To whyrle out of the lyon if she might
And Sygnifer his candels shewed bright
Whan that Cresyde vnto her bedde went
Within her fathers fayre bright tente

Retur-

Retournyng in her ſoule aye vp and doune
The wordes of this ſodayne Diomede
His great eſtate/and peryl of the towne
And that ſhe was alone/and had nede
Of frendes helpe/and thus began to brede
The cauſe why/the ſothe for to telle
She tolde fully purpoſe for to dwelle

The morowe came/ and gooſtly for to ſpeke
This Diomede is come vnto Creſeyde
And ſhortly/leſte that ye my tale breke
So wel he for him ſelfe ſpake and feyde
That al her fyghes fore/doune he leyde
And fynally/the ſothe for to ſayne
He leſte her the great of al her payne

And after this/the ſtorye telleth vs
That ſhe him yaue the fayre baye ſtede
The whiche ſhe ones wan of Troylus
And eke a brothe (and that was lytel mede)
That Troylus was/ſhe yaue this Diomede
And eke the bet from forewe him to releue
She made him weare a penoell of her ſleue

I fynde eke in ſtories elſe where
Whan through the body hurte was Diomede
Of Troylus/tho wepte ſhe many a tere
Whan that ſhe ſawe his wyde woundes blede
And that ſhe tolde to hepen him good hede
And for to healen him of his ſmerte
Wha ſayne/I not/ that ſhe yaue him her herte

But trewly the ſtorie telleth vs
Ther made neuer woman more wo
Than ſhe/ whan that ſhe falſed Troylus
She ſayd alas/for nowe is clene ago
My name in trouthe of loue for euermo
For I haue falſed one the gentyleſt
That euer was/ and one the worthyeſt

Alas/ of me vnto the worldes ende
Shal neyther ben ymutteyn nor ſonge
No good worde/for theſe bokes wol me ſhende
Walled ſhal I ben on many a longe
Throughout ȳ worlde/my bell ſhal be ronge
And woman moſte wol hate me of all
Alas/ that euere a cauſe me ſhulde fal

They wol ſayne/in as moche as in me is
I haue hem done diſhonour wela way
Al be I nat the firſt that dyd amys
What helpeth that/to don my blame away
But ſens I ſe there is no better way
And that to late is nowe for me to rewe
To Diomede I wol algate be trewe

But Troylus/ ſens I no better may
And ſens that thus departen ye and I
Yet pray I god ſo yeue you right good day
As for the gentyleſt vnyght trewly
That euer I ſawe/to ſeruen fayth fully
And beſt can aye his ladyes honour kepe
And with that worde ſhe braſte anon to wepe

And certes you ne hateth ſhal I neuer
And frendes loue/that ſhal ye haue of me
And my good worde/al ſhulde I lyuen euer
And trewly I wolde right ſore be
For to ſene you in aduerſyte
And gyltleſſe I wote wel I you leue
And al ſhal paſſe/and thus take I my leue

But trewly how longe it was betwene
That ſhe forſoke him for this Diomede
There is none auctour telleth it I wene
Take euery man nowe to his bokes hede
He ſhal no terme fynden/out of drede
For though that he began to wowe her ſoone
Er he her wan/yet was there more to done

Ne me ne lyſte this ſely woman chyde
Further than the ſtorie wol deuyſe
Her name alas/is publyſſhed ſo wyde
That for her gylte it ought enough ſuffyſe
And if I might excuſe her in any wyſe
For ſhe ſo ſory was for her vntrouthe
Iwys I wolde excuſe her yet for routhe

This Troylus/ as I before haue tolde
Thus driueth forth/as wel as he hath myght
But oft was his herte hote and colde
And namely that yliie nynthe nyght
Whiche on the morowe ſhe had him behyght
To come ayen/god wote ful lytel reſte
Had he that nyght/nothyng to ſlepe him leſte

The

The lauret crowned Phebus/ with his heate
Gan in his course aye vpwarde as he weute
To warmen of the erst see the waues weate
And Lyces doughter songe/ with fressh entēt
Whan Troylus his Pandare after sente
And on the walles of the towne they pleyde
To loke/ if they can sene aught of Creseyde

Tyl it was noone/ they stoden for to se
Who that there came/ and euery maner wight
That came fro ferre/ they sayden it was she
Tyl that they couldyn knowen hym aright
Nowe was his herte dull/ nowe was it lyght
And thus betraped stoden for to stare
Aboute naught/ this Troylus & Pandare

To Pandarus/ this Troylus tho seyde
For aught I wotte/ before noone sykerly
In to this towne ne cometh nat here Creseyde
She hath ynough to done hardely
To wynnen from her father/ so trowe I
Her olde father wol yet make her dyne
Er that she go/ god yeue his herte pyne

Pandarus answerd/ it may wel ben certayne
And for thy let vs dyne/ I the beseche
And after noone thā mayst thou come agayn
And whom they go/ without more speche
And comen ayen/ but longe may they seche
Er that they fynde that they after gape
Fortune hem bothe thynketh for to iape

(Quod Troylus) I se wel nowe that she
Is tarryed with her olde father so
That er she come it wol nygh euen be
Come forthe/ I wol vnto the yate go
These porters ben vnkonnyng euermo
And I wol done hem holden vp the yate
As naught ne were/ al though she come late

The day gothe faste/ & after that came eue
And yet came nat to Troylus Creseyde
He loketh forthe by hedge/ by tree/ by greue
And ferre his heed ouer the wall he leyde
And at the laste he turned him/ and seyde
By god I wote her meanyng nowe Pandare
Almoste ywis al newe was my care

Nowe douteleesse this lady can her goode
I wote she cometh rydyng prively
I cōmende her wysdom by myn hoode
She wol nat maken people nycely
Gaure on her whan y she cometh/ but softly
Vp nyght in to the towne she thynketh ryde
And dere brother/ thynke nat longe to abyde

We haue naught elis for to don ywis
And Pandarus/ nowe wyste thou trowen me
Haue here my trouthe I se her/ ponde she is
Heaue vp thyn eyen may/ mayste thou nat se
Pandare answerde/ nay so mote I the
Al wōg by god/ what sayst yu mā wher art?
That I se ponde/ nys but a sparre carte

Alas/ thou sayest right sothe (qd Troylus)
But hardely it is nat al for nought
That my myn herte I nowe tresoyce thus
It is ayenst some good/ I haue a thought
Not I nat howe/ but sens y I was wrought
Ne felte I suche a comfort dare I say
She cometh to nyght/ my lyfe that durst I lay

Pandarus answerde/ it may be wel ynough
And helde with hym/ of al that euer he sayde
But in his herte he thought/ and softe lough
And to hym selfe ful soberly he sayde
From hasel wodde/ there ioly Robyn playde
Shal come al that thou abydest here
Pe/ farwel al the snowe of ferne yere

The wardeyn of the yates gan to call
The folke/ which that without the yates were
And bade hem driuen in her beestes all
Or al the night they muste bleuen there
And ferre within the nyght/ with many a tere
This Troylus gan homwarde for to ryde
For wel he serth it helpeth nat to abyde

But natheleesse he gladded him in this
He thought he misacounted had his day
And sayd/ I vnderstonde haue al amys
For thylke night I lafte Creseyde sey
She sayd I shal ben here/ if that I may
Er that the moone/ o dere herte swete
The lyon passe/ out of this Arete

For

For whiche she may yet holde al her byheste
And on the morowe/ vnto the yate he wente
And vp and downe/by west & este by este
Vpon the walles made he many a wente
But al for naught/his hope alway him blente
For whiche at nyght/in sorowe & syghes sadde
He wente him home/withoutyn any more

This hope al clene out of his herte fledde
He nat hath wherof no we lenger for to honge
But for þ payne him thought his herte bledde
So were his thoughtes sharpe/ & wonder strong
For whan he sawe that she abode so longe
He nyste what he iudgen of it myght
Saue she hath broken that she him behyght

The thirde/fourthe/fyfte/and fyfte day
After the dayes ten/of whiche I tolde
Betwyxen hope and drede his herte lay
Yet somwhat trustyng on her hestes olde
But whan he sawe she nolde her terme holde
He can nowe sene none other remedye
But for to shape him sone for to dye

Therwith the wicked spiryt/ god vs blesse
Whiche that men clepen woode ialousye
Gan in him crepe/in al this heuynesse
For whiche sprange he wolde sone dye
He ne ete ne dronke for his melancolye
And eke from euery compayne he fledde
This was the lyfe that al this tyme he ledde

He so desayte was/that no maner man
Vnneth him myght vnowen there he wente
So was he leane/and therto pale and wan
And feble/ that he walketh by potente
And with his ire he thus him selfe shente
But who so asked him wherof him smerte
He sayd/his harme was al aboute his herte

Priam ful ofte/and eke his mother dere
His brethern & his sustren gan him frayne
Why he so sorouful was in al his chere
And what thyng was þ cause of al his payne
But al for naught/he nolde his cause playne
But sayd/he felte a greuous maladye
Aboute his herte/and sayne he wolde dye

So on a day he layde him downe to slepe
And so by sell that in slepe him thought
That in a forest fast he walked to wepe
For sone of her/ þ him these paynes wrought
And vp and downe/as he that forest sought
He mette he sawe a bore/with tuskes greate
That slept ayenst the bright sonnes heate

And by this bore/faste in her armes folde
Lay lyssyng ape his lady bright Creseyde
For sorowe of whiche/whan he it gan beholde
And for despyte/out of his slepe he breyde
And loude he cryed on Pandarus/and seyde
O Pandarus/ nowe knowe I croppe & roote
I nam but dead/there nys non other boote

My lady bright Creseyde hath me betrayde
In whom I trusted moste of any wight
She els where hath nowe her herte apayde
The blysful goddes/through her great might
Haue in my dreame yshewed it ful right
Thus in my dreme/ Creseyde haue I beholde
And al this thyng to Pandarus he tolde

O my Creseyde alas/what subtylte?
What newe lust? what beaute? what science?
What wathe of vsse cause haue ye to me?
What gylte of me? what sel experience
Hath me rafte alas? thyn aduertence
O trust/o sayth/o depe assuraunce
Who hath me rafte Creseyde/ al my plesaunce

Alas/ why let I you from hence go?
For whiche wel nygh out of my wyt I breyde
Who shal nowe trowe on any othes mo?
God wote I wende/o lady bright Creseyde
That euery worde was gospel that ye seyde
But who may bet begyle/if him lyste
Than he on whom men wenen best to tryste

What shal I done/ my Pandarus alas?
I fele nowe so sharpe a newe payne
Sens that there is no remedye in this caas
That bet were it/I with myn handes twayne
My seluen slowe/ than al way thus to playne
For through þ deth my wo shuld haue an ende
Ther euery day with lyfe my selfe I shende

Pandare

Pandare answerde & sayd/ alas the whyle
That I was borne/ haue I nat sayd er this
That dreames many a mauer may begyle
And why? for folke expounden hem amys
How darste thou sayne that false thy lady is
For any dreame/ right for thyn owne byrde
Let be this thought/ thou canst no dremes rede

Parauenture there thou dreamest of this bore
It may so be that it may signifye
Her father/ whiche that olde is and eke hore
Ayen the sonne lythe on poynte to dye
And she for sorowe gynneth wepe and crye
And vpsseth him/ there he lythe on the grounde
Thus shuldest thou thy dreme aryght expounde

How might I than done (quod Troylus)
To knowe of this/ ye were it neuer so lyte
Now sayest thou wisely (qd̄ this Pandarus)
Thy rede is this/ sens thou canst wel endyte
That hastely a letter thou her write
Through which thou shalt wel bringen about
To knowe a sothe/ of that thou arte in doute

And se nowe why? for this I dare wel sayne
That if so is/ that she vntrewe be
I can nat trowen that she wol write agayne
And if she write/ thou shalt ful sone yse
As whether she hath any lyberte
To come ayen/ or els in some clause
If she be let/ she wol assigne a cause

Thou hast nat written to her sens ỳ she went
Nor she to the/ and this I durste lay
There may suche cause ben in her entente
That hardely thou wolte thy seluen say
That her abode the best is for you twayn
Nowe write her than/ & thou shalt fele sone
A sothe of al/ there is no more to done

Acorded ben to this conclusyoun
And that anon/ these ylke lordes two
And hastely sate Troylus adoun
And rolleth in his herte to and fro
How he may best discryuen her his wo
And to Creseyde his owne lady dere
He wrote right thus/ & sayd as ye may here.

¶ The copy of the letter.

Right fresshe flour/ whose I haue ben & shal
Withoyten parte of elis where fortune
With herte/ body/ lyfe/ lust/ thought/ and al
I wofull wight/ in euery humble wyse
That longe can tell/ or herte may deuyse
As ofte as mater occuppeth place
Me recōmaunde vnto your noble grace

Lyketh it you to weten swete herte
As ye wel knowe/ how longe tyme agon
That ye me left in aspre payne smerte
Whan that ye went/ of whiche yet bote non
Haue I non had/ but euer worse bygon
Fro day to day am I/ and so mote I welle
Whyle it you lyst/ of wele and wo my welle

For whiche to you/ with dredeful herte trewe
I write/ as he that sorowe drueth to write
Thy wo/ that euery houre encreaseth newe
Complaynyng as I dare/ or can endyte
And that defaced is/ that may ye wyte
The teares/ which that from myn eyen reyne
That wolden speke/ if ỳ they durste & playne

Your fyrst beseche I/ that your eyen clere
To loke on this defouled ye nat holde
And oueral this/ that ye my lady dere
Wol vouchesafe this letter to beholde
And by the cause eke of my care colde
That sleeth my wyt/ if aught amys me sterte
Forgeue it me/ myn owne swete herte

If any seruaunt durst or ought of right
Vpon his lady pitously complayne
Than wene I that I ought be that wight
Conspired this/ that ye these monthes twayne
Haue tarryed/ there ye sayden sothe to sayne
But ten dayes ye nolde in hoste soiourne
But in two monthes/ yet ye nat retourne

But for as moche/ as me mote nedes lyke
Al that you lyst/ I dare nat playne more
But humbly/ with sorouful syghes syke
Your wrtte I myn vntrusty sorowes sore
Fro day to day/ desyring euer more
To knowen fully/ if your wyl it were
How ye haue fared and doon whyle ye be there

The

Moste welfare and heale elle god encreafe
In honour fuche/ that vpwarde my degree
I gro we alwaye/ fo that it neuer ceafe
Right as youre herte aye can my lady frē
Deuyfe/ I pray to god fo mote it be
And graunt it that ye foone vpon me rewe
As wefely as my al I am to you trewe

And if you lyketh fhowen of the fare
Of me/ whofe wo ther may no wyght difcryue
I can no more/ but cheft of euery care
At wryting of this letter I was on fyue
Al redy out my wofful goft to dryue
Whiche I delay/ and holde hym yet in honde
Vpon the fyght of mater of youre fonde

Myne eyen two in bayne/ with whiche I fe
Of forowful teares falte arn woxen wellis
Thy fonge in playnt of myne aduerfyte
Thy good in harm/ myn eafe elle wanen hel is
Thy hope in wo/ I can fey no we nought elles
But turned is/ for whiche my lyfe I warp
Euery ioye or eafe in his contrary

Which with youre cōming home agen to Troy
Ye may redreffe/ and more a thoufande fythe
Than euer I had encreffen in me ioy
Ful wel was there neuer herte yet fo blythe
To haue his lyfe/ as I fhal hen as fwythe
As I you fe/ and though no maner routhe
Can meuen you/ yet thynketh on youre trouth

And if fo be my gylte hath deffe deferued
Or if you lyft no more vpon me fe
In guerdon yet of that I haue you ferued
Beforne I you/ myn owne lady frē
That hervpon ye wolden write me
For loue of god/ my right fode fierre
That deth may make an ende of al my werre

If other cauſe aught doth you for to dwell
That with youre letter ye may me recomforte
For though to me youre abſence is an hell
With patience I wol my wo comforte
And with youre letter of hope I wol difporte
For we wrieth fwete/ a lef me thus not playne
Whi hope or deffe/ deſyreth me fro payne

Alwys myn owne derē herte trewe
I wote that whan ye nede vpon me fe
So fofte haue I myn heale/ & eke myn hewe
Creſeyde fhal nat conne fhowen me
Alwys myn hertes day/ my lady frē
So thurſteth aye myn herte to beholde
Youre beaute/ that dunceth my lyfe I holde

I fay no more/ al haue I for to fey
To you wel more than I telle may
But whether that ye do me lyue or dey
Yet pray I god/ fo peue you right good day
And farreth wel goodly fayre frē/ he may
As ye that lyfe or deffe me may cōmaunde
And to youre trouthe aye I me recōmaunde

With heale fuche/ that but ye peuen me
The fame heale/ I fhal non heale haue
In you lyeth/ whan you lyft that it fo be
The day in whiche me clotheth fhal my graue
And in you my lyfe/ in you might for to faue
Or fro diſeaſe of al paynes fmerte
And fare no we wel myn owne fwete herte.

Le voſtre T.

This lettre fouthe was fent vnto Creſeyde
Of whiche her anſwere in effecte was this
Ful pitouſly fhe wrote agen/ and feyde
That alſo foone as fhe myght p'wis
She wolde come/ & mende al that was amys
And fynally fhe wrote and fayd then
She wolde come/ ye/ but fhe nyſte whēn

But in her letter made fhe fuche feeſtes
That wōder was/ & fwore fhe loued him beſt
Of whiche he founde but botomleſſe byheſtes
But Troylus thou mayſt no we eeſt & weſt
Pype in an Ivy leeſe if that the left (chaūce
Thus gothe ꝑ worlde/ god ſhylde vs fro miſ-
And euery wight that meneth trouth auaunce

Encreaſeth gan the wo fro day to nyght
Of Troylus/ for tarpeng of Creſeyde
And leſſeth gan his hope and eke his myght
For which al downe he in his bedde him leyde
He ne ete/ dronke/ ne ſlept/ ne worde ſeyde
Imagynyng aye that fhe was vnkynde
For which wel nigh he wept out of his minde

This

This dreme/of which I tolde haue eke besoyn
May neuer come out of his remembraunce
He thought aye wel/he had his lady soone
And that Ioues/ of his purueyaunce
Hym shewed had in slepe the signyfiaunce
Of her vntrouth/and his disauenture
And that the bore was shewed him in figure

For whiche he for Sybille his suster sente
That called was Cassandre eke al aboute
And al his dreame he tolde her er he stente
And her besought assoylen him the doute
Of the stronge bore/ with tusses stoute
And fynally/ within a lytel stounde
Cassandre him gan thus his dreame expoũde

She gan first smyle/and sayd o brother dere
If thou a sothe of this desyrest to knowe
Thou must a fewe of olde stoues here
To purpose howe that fortune ouerthrowe
Hath lordes olde/through which w'in a throwe
Thou shalt this bore knowe/e of what kynde
He comen is/as men in bookes fynde

Diane/whiche that wrothe was and in yre
For grekes nolde done her sarrifyce
Ne encens vpon her auter sette on fyre
She for that grekes gonne her so dispyse
Wrake her in a wonder cruel wyse
For with a bore/as great as oxe in stall
She made vp frete her corne and vynes all

To slee the bore was al the countrey reysed
Amonge whiche there came this bore to se
A mayde/one of this worlde the best ypraysed
And Meleager/lorde of that countre
He loued so this fresshe mayden fre
That with his manhode/er he wolde stente
This bore he slough/and her the heed he sente

Of whiche/as olde bokes tellen vs
There rose a conteke and a great enuye
And of this lorde dissended Tideus
Vp signe/or els olde bokes lye
But howe this Meleager gan to dye
Through his mother/wol I you nat telle
For al to longe it were for to dwelle

She tolde eke howe Tideus/er he stente
Vnto the stronge cyte of Thebes
(To claymen kyngdom of the cyte) went
For his sela we day Polymites
Of whiche the brother dan Ethiocles
Ful wrongfully of Thebes helde the strength
This tolde she vp processe al by length

She tolde eke howe Hemonydes afierte
Whan Tydeus slough fyfty knyghtes stoute
She tolde eke al the prophesies vp herte
And howe that seuen kynges with her route
Destrogeden the cyte al aboute
And of the holy serpent/and the well
And of the furyes al she gan him tell

Associat pfugum/ Tydeus p:lo Polimiten
Tidea legatum docet insidiasq; secundis
Tertius Hermodicn canit et vates fatidicus
Horo furie Lemne quito narrant et angues
Quartus habet reges interuntes pretia septem
Archynon buslum/ seyto ludiq; leguntur
Dat Graios Thebes vate septimus vmbris
Octauo cecidit Tideus spes vita pelagis
Ipomedon nono mouitur/cum Parthonepes
Fulmine pcusso/ decimo Lanapus supatur
Vndecimo sese perimunt p vulnera fratres
Arguuam flentem/narrat duodenus signum.

Of Archimories buryenge/ and the playes
And howe Amphioray fyl through the grounde
Howe Tideus was slayne/lorde of Argeyes
And howe Hypomedon in a lytel stounde
Was dreynte/ and deed Parthonepe of houde
And also howe Campaneus the proude
With thoder dynte was slayne/ p eryed loude

He gan eke tel him howe that eyther brother
Ethiocles and Polimites also
At a scarmysshe/ eche of hem slough other
And of Argyues wepyng and her mo
And howe p to wy was brent she tolde eke tho
And tho dissended downe from vers olde
To Diomede/and thus she spake and tolde

This olde bore betokeneth Diomede
Tideus sonne/that downe dessended is

Fro

fro thēce/that made the boat to blede
And thy lady where so she be ywis
This Diomede her herte hath/and she his
Wepe if thou wolte or leave/for out of doute
This Diomede is gon/and thou arte oute

Thou sayest nat soth (quō he) thou sorceresse
Well al thy false gosle of prophesie
Thou wenest ben a great devinaresse
Lowe first thou nat this foole of fantasye
Payany set on fedres for to fye
Away (quod he) there Ioues yeue the sorowe
Thou shalt be fals paraventure yet to morowe

As wel thou mightest lyen on good Alceste
That was of creatures (but men lye)
That euer weren/kyndest and the beste
For whan her husbonde was in ieopardye
To dye him selfe/but if she wolde dye
Dne chese for him to dye/and goon to hell
And starfe anon/as vs the bookes tell

Cassandre gothe/and he with cruell herte
Forpate his wo/for angre of her sperhe
And from his bedde al sodainly he sterte
As though al hole him had ymade a leche
And day by day he gan enquire and serche
A sothe of this/with al his ful cure
And thus he dryueth forthe his aventure

Fortune/ whethe that permutacion
Of thynges hath/as it is her cōmytted
Through purueyaunce and disposycion
Of hygh Ioue/as regnes shal ben flytted
Fro folke to folke/or whā they shal ben smytted
Gan pull away the fethers bright of Troye
Fro day to day/tyl they ben bare of ioye

Amonge al this/the fyne of the ieoperdy
Of Hector gan approchen wonder blyue
The fate wolde his soule shulde vnbodye
And shapen had a mesure it out to dryue
Ayens whiche fate him helpeth nat to stryue
But on a day to fyghten gan he wende
At whiche alas/he caught his fyues ende

For whethe me thynketh euery maner wight
That haunteth armes/ought to be wayle
The dethe of him that was so noble a knyght

For as he drough a kyng by thauentayle
Vnware of this/Achilles through the mayle
And through the body gan him for to pryue
And thus the worthy knight was reste of lyue

For whom as olde bookes tellen vs
Was made such wo/that longe it may nat tell
And namely the sorowe of Troylus
That nepte him was of worthynesse the well
And in this wo gan Troylus to dwell
That what for sorowe/loue/and for distresse
Ful ofte a day he bade his herte brestе

But nathelesse/though he gan him dispayre
And dredde aye that his lady was vntrewe
Yet aye on her his herte gan repayre
And as these louers done/ he sought aye newe
To get ayen Creseyde bought as dewe
And in his herte he wente her excusynge
That Calkas caused al her tarynge

And ofte tyme he was in purpose greate
Him selven yolde a pilgrym to disguyse
To seke her/but he may nat counterfeate
To ben vnknowen of folke that weren wyse
Ne fynde excuse aright that may suffyse
If he amonge the grekes knowen were
For whiche he wept ful ofte many a tere

To her he wrote yet ofte tyme al newe
Ful pitously/he lefte it nat for slouthe
Desechyng her/sens that he was trewe
That she wol come ayen/& holde her trouthe
For whiche Creseyde vpon a day for routhe
Ytaken so/touchyng al this matere
Wrote him ayen/and sayd as ye may here

¶ Cupides sonne/ensample of goodlyhede
O swerde of knyghthode/ sours of gentylnesse
How might a wight in turment and in drede
And healelesse pou sende/as pet gladnesse
Ihertelesse/ Isicke/ In distresse
Sens pe with me/nor I with pou may deale
pou neyther sende I herte may nor heale

Your lettres ful the paper al yplayuted
Conceyued hath myn hertes pyte
I haue eke sene with terres al depaynted

Your letter/and how we that ye requiren me
To come ayen/whiche yet ne may nat be
But why/leste that this lettre foundren were
No mencion ne make I nowe for ferre

Greuous to me (god wote) is your vnrest
Your haste/and that the goddes ordynaunce
It semeth nat ye take it for the beste
For other thyng nys in your remembraunce
As thynketh me/but onely your plesaunce
But bethe nat wrothe/and that I you beseche
For that I tary is al for wicked speche

For I haue herde wel more than I wende
Touchyng vs two/how thinges haue ystode
Whiche I shal with dissymulyng amende
And bethe nat wroth/I haue eke vnderstonde
How ye ne do but holden me in honde
But nowe no force/I can nat in you gesse
But al trouthe and al gentylnesse

Come I wol/but yet in suche disioynte
I stonde as now/that what yere/or what day
That this shal be/that can I nat apoynte
But in effecte I pray you as I may
Of your good worde/and of your frendshyp ay
For trewly whyle that my lyfe may dure
As for a frende ye may in me assure

yet praye I you on ruel ye ne take
That it is shorte/whiche that I to you write
I dare nat there I any wel letters make
For neuer yet ne couthe I wel endyte
Eke great effecte may write in place lyte
A hentent is al/and nat the letters space
And fareth wel/god haue you in his grace.

La vostre L.

This Troylus thought this letter al straunge
Whan he it sawe/and sorowfully he sygh
Him thought it lyke a kalendes of eschaunge
But fynally he fel ne trowen might
That she ne wolde him holden that she hygh
For with ful ruel wyll lyst him to leue
That louyth wel I such case though him greue

But natheles/may sayne that at the laste
For any thing/may shal the sothe se
And suche a case betydde/and that as faste

That Troylus wel vnderstode that she
Was nat so kynde/as that her ought be
And fynally he wote nowe out of doute
That al is lost/that he hath ben about

Stode on a day in his melancolye
This Troylus/and in suspection
Of her/for whom he wende to dye
And so befyll/that throughout Troye toun
As was the gyse/pryme was vp and doun
A maner cote armure/as sayth the storie
Before Deiphebe/in signe of his victorie

The whiche cote/as telleth Lollius
Deiphebe it had rente fro Diomede
The same day/and whan this Troylus
It sawe/he gan to taken of it hede
Auysyng of the length and of the brede
And al the werke/vnt as he gan behalde
Ful sodainly his herte gan to colde

As he that on the coler fonde within
A brothe/that he Creseyde pane at morowe
That she from Troye muste nedes twynn
In remembraunce of him/and of hers sorowe
And she him sayde ayen her sayth to borowe
To kepe it aye/but nowe ful wel he wyste
His lady nas no lenger on to tryste

He gothe him home/and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus/and al this newe chaunce
And of this brothe he tolde him worde & ende
Complaynyng of her hertes variaunce
His longe sore/his trouth/and his penaunce
And after dethe/without wordes more
Ful faste he axed/his reste him to restore

Than spake he thus/O lady myn Creseyde
Where is your sayth/& where is your behest?
Whet is yo! loue/whet is your trouth he seyde
Of Diomede haue ye nowe al this fest?
Alas/I wolde haue trowed at the lest
That sens ye nolde in trouthe to me stonde
That ye thus nolde haue holden me in honde

Who shal nowe trowen on any othes mo?
Alas I neuer wolde haue wende er this
That ye Creseyde couthe haue chaunged so
Ne but I had a-gylte/and done amys

So cruel wombe I nat pour herte yiue
To slee me thus/alas pour name of trouthe
Is no we forbone/and that is al my routhe

Was therr none other broche pou fyfi fete
To sette with pour we me soue (quod he)
But tyfise broche that I with teres wete
You pane/as for a remembraunce of me
Some other cause alas/ne had pe
Nat for disppte/and eke for that pe wende
Al pterly to slee wey pour entende

Thugh which I se/ pe clene out of po' mynde
pe haue me caste/and I ne can nor may
For al this worlde/within myn herte synde
To vnlouery pou a quarter of a day
In curfed tyme I borne was wela way
That pou that bone me al this wo endure
pet loue I best of any creature

Nowe god (qd he) me sende pet the grace
That I may meten with this Dromede
And trewly/if I haue might and space
Yet shal I make I hope his sydes blede
Nowe god (qd he) that ought est take hede
To sothfastnesse trouthe/ and wronges to punyce
Why nyl thou don a vengeaunce of this vyce

O Pandarus/that in dremes for to tryste
Be blamed haste/i wonte arte ofte vpbreyde
Nowe mayst thou sene thy selfe/ny that pe lyste
Nowe ter we to nowe thy mere wight Troylus
In sondry formes (god it wote) he sepde
The goddes shewen soothe hope and tene
In slepe/and by my dreame it is nowe sene

And certainly/withouten more speche
I trowe hener forthe/as forforthe as I may
Myn owne bothe in armes wol I seche
I recche nat howe soone be the day
But trewly Troylus/swete may
Whom I haue with al my might pserued
That pe thus done/I haue it nat deserued

This Pandarus/that al these thynges herde
And wyste wel he sayd a sothe of this
He nat a worde ayen to him answerde
For sorp of this fynden fare we he in
And shamed for his nece hath done amysse
And stante astonyed of these cruel tyding
As styll as stone/a worde ne coulde he sing

But at the laste thus he spake/and sighte
Wy brother dere/I may do the no moste
What shulde I saye/I hate pwis Troylus
And god it wote I wol hate her therrmore
And that thou me besoughtest don of pore
Hauyng vnto myn honour ne my reste
Right no regarde/I dyd al that the leste

If I dyd aught/that might lyken the
It is me lefe/and of this treason nowe
God wote that it a sorowe is to me
And dredeles/for herres ease of pou
Right sayne I wold amende it/wyst I howe
And fro this worlde/almighty god I pray
Delyuer her soone/I can no more say

Great was the sorowe & playnte of Troylus
But soothe her course fortune aye can holde
Lresepde lourth the sonne of Tydeus
And Troylus mote wepe in cares colde
Suche is this worlde/who so it can beholde
In eche estate is sytil herres reste
God leue vs to take it for the beste

In many cruell batayle out of drede
Of Troylus/this pine noble knyght
(As men may in these olde bokes rede)
Was seue his knyghthod/i his great myght
And dredeles his pre day and nyght
Put cruelly the grekes aye abought
(And al way most this Dromedr) he sought

And ofte tyme (I synde) that they mette
With vlooby strokes/and with wordes greate
Assayeng howe her speares weren whette
And god it wote/with many a cruell heate
Gan Troylus vpon his helme to beate
But wathelesse/fortune it naught ne wolde
Of outher hande that outher dyen shulde

And if I had pleden for to write
The armes of this pine worthy man
Thay wolde I of his batayles endyte
And for that I to write first began
Of his loue/I haue sayd as I can
Hys worthy dedes/who so lyste hem here
Rede Dares/he can tel hem al pere

Beſechyng euery lady bright of hewe
And euery gentyl woman/what ſhe be
Al be it that Creſeyde was vntrewe
That for that gylte ye be nat wrothe with me
Ye may her gylt in other bokes ſe
And gladdeth I wol write/if you leſt
Penelopes troathe/and good Alceſte

Ne I ſay nat this al onely for theſe men
But moſte for women that betrayed be
Through falſe folke/god yeue hē ſorowe amen
That with her great wyt and ſubtylte
Betrayen you/and this meueth me
To ſpeke/and in effecte you al I pray
Beth ware of men/& herkeneth what I ſay

¶ Go lytel booke/go my lytel tragedye
There god thy maker yet er that I dye
So ſende me might to make ſome comedye
But lytel boke/make thou none enuye
But ſubiecte ben vnto al poeſye
And kyſſe the ſteppes/wher as thou ſeeſt pace
Of Vergyl/Ouyde/Homer/Lucan/& Stace

And for there is ſo great diuerſyte
In englyſſhe/and in writyng of our tonge
So pray I to god/that none miſwrite the
Ne the myſſe metre/for defaute of tonge
And redde where ſo thou be/or elles ſonge
That thou be vnderſtonde/god I beſeche
But yet to purpoſe of my rather ſpeche

The wrathe/as I began you for to ſey
Of Troylus/the grekes boughten dere
For thouſandes his hondes maden dey
As he that was withouten any pere
Saue in his tyme Hector as I can here
But welaway/ſaue onely goddes wyll
Diſpytouſly hym ſlough the feirſe Achyl

And whan that he was ſlayne in this manere
His lyght goſte/ful blyſſfully is went
Vp to the holo naneſſe of the ſeuenthe ſpere
In his place lokyng euerych element
And there he ſawe/with ful auyſement
The erratyke ſterres/herkenyng armonye
With ſoūes ful of heuenyſſe melodye

And downe from thence/faſte he gan auyſe
This lytel ſpotte of erthe/that with the ſee
Enbraced is/and fully gan deſpyſe
This wretched worlde/and held al vanyte
To reſpecte of the playne felycite
That is in heuen aboue/and at the laſte
Ther he was ſlayne/his loking dounward caſte

And in him ſelfe he lough/right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his dethe ſo faſte
And dampned al our werkes that folo with ſo
The blynde luſte/whiche that may nat laſte
And ſhulden al our herte on heuen caſte
And forthe he went/shortly for to tell
There as Mercurie ſorted him to dwell

Suche fyne hath ſo/this Troylus for loue
Suche fyne hath al his great worthyneſſe
Suche fyne hath his eſtate royal aboue
Suche fyne his luſt/ſuch fyn hath his nobleſſe
Suche fyne hath falſe worldes brotelneſſe
And thus began his louyng of Creſeyde
As I haue tolde/and in this wyſe he deyde

O yonge freſſhe folkes/he or ſhe
In whiche the loue vp groweth with your age
Repayreth home from worldly vanyte
And of your hertes/vp caſteth the viſage
To thyſelfe god/that after his ymage
You made/and thynketh al nys but a fayre
This worlde that paſſeth ſoone/as floures fayre

And loueth him/the whiche that right for loue
Vpon a croſſe our ſoules for to bey
First ſtarfe & roſe/and ſyt in heuen aboue
For he nyl ſaffen no wight dare I ſey
That wol his herte al holy on him ley
And ſeith he beſt to loue is/and moſte make
What nedeth feyned loues for to ſeke

Lo here of payneme curſed olde rytes
Lo here what al her goddes may auayle
Lo here this wretched worldes appetytes
Lo here the fyne and guerdon for trauayle
Of Ioue/Apollo/of Mars/& ſuche raſſayle
Lo here the ſame of olde clerkes ſpeche
In poetrye/if ye her bokes ſeche

Donne

O moral Gower / this boke I directe
To the / and to the philosophical Strode
To vouchesafe where nede is to correcte
Of your benignytees and zeles goode
And to ꝑ soth̄fast Crist that starf on roode
With al myne herte / of mercy euer I praye
And to the lorde aright / thus I speke and saye

Thou one / two / and three / eterne on hyne
That raignest aye in three / two / and one
Vncircumscript / and al maygst circumscryue
Vs from vengeable and mortal sinne
Defende / and to thy mercy conuertsinne
So make vs Ihesu to thy mercy digne
For love of mayde / and mother thyn benigne.

¶ Thus endeth the fyfth and laste booke of Troylus: and here folowyth the ꝓfytable and dolorous testament of fayre Creseyde.

The testament of Creseyde

Thus fortune ryl a careful dyte
Shulde counsponde / ꝛ be equinokyal
Ryght so it was whā I began to write
This tragedy / the weder nyght feruent
Blew Aures in myddes of the heuē
Showres of hayle cam fro the northe bi este
That scantly fro the rofe I myght me defende

Yet neuertheles within myne oratorie
I sitte / whan Eolus had his bemes hyght
Vnder wepe to west / and sped hider ryght
And fayre Venus the hevenly of the nyght
Vprysen / and sate hoole on the wyfe ful right
Ful glasyn fare in myne oratorie
Of gode ꝓfytes beryls besemyng bolne

Thurghout ꝑ glasse her bemes brast so fayre
That I myght se on euery syde me by
The northern wynde had purified the ayre
And shedde his myrky cloudes fro the skye
The frost fersed / the blastes bytterly
Fro poole Artike come whisshyng loude ꝛ shyl
And caused me remoue ayenst my wyl

For I trusted that Venus louer quene
To whom sometyme I dyght obedience
Wyth sobed herte of loue she wolde make grene
And therupon with humble reuerence
I thought to prayen her hye magnifycence
But for great colde as than I letted was
And in my chambre to the fyre can pas

Though loue be hote / yet in a man of age
It bydeth nat so soone as in youthhede
Of whom the blode is flowyng in a rage
And in the olde / the corage dul and dede
Of whiche the fyre out warde is best remed
To helpe by phisyke wher that nature fayled
I am expert / for bothe I haue assayled

I made the fyre and beased me about
Than tolde I dinke my spirites to confarte
And armed me wel fro the colde theroute
To cutte the wynter nyght and make it shorte
I tolde a queare / and lefte al other sporte
Written by worthy Chaucer glorious
Of fayre Creseyde / and lusty Troylus

And there I founde after that Diomede
Receyued had that lady bright of hewe
How Troylus neer out of his wyte abrede
And wepte sore / with visage pale of hewe
For whiche wanhope his teares gan reneue
Whyle esperous remeued hym ageyne
Thus whyle in hope he lyued ꝛ whyle in payne

Of her behest she had great comfortyng
Trustyng to Troy ꝑ she wolde make retourne
Whiche he despised most of al erthly thyng
For why she was his onely paramour
But whan he sawe passed bothe day ꝛ hour
Of her gayneryse / in sorowe can oppresse
His wofol herte / in care and heuynesse

Of his distresse me nedeth nat reherse
For worthy Chaucer in that same boke
In goodly termes / and in ioly verse
Compyled hath his cares who wyl loke
To bidde my slepe another quaunt I toke
In whiche I founde the fatal destiny
Of fayre Cresepde / whiche ended wretchedly

Who wot if al that Chaucer wrate was trewe
Nor I wotte nat if this narration
Be authorysed / or forged of the newe
Of some poete by his inuention
Made to reporte the lamentation
And wofull ende of this lusty Cresepde
And what distresse she was in or she deyde

Whan Diomede had al his appetyte
And more fulfylled of this fayre lady
Upon another sette was al his delyte
And sende to her a lybel repudy
And her excluded fro his company
Than desolate she walked vp and downe
As some men sayne / in the courte as comune

O fayre Cresepde / the floure and a per se
Of Troy & Grece / how were thou fortunate
To chaunge in fylthe al thy semynute
And be with fleshly lust so maculate
And go among the grekes early and late
So gyglotlyke / taspng thy foule plesaunce
I haue pyte the shulde fal suche myschaunce

Yet neuerthelesse / what euer men deme or say
In scornful langage of thy brutelnesse
I shal excuse / as ferforth as I may
Thy womanhed / thy wisedom and fairnesse
The whiche fortune hath put to such dystresse
As her pleased / & nothyng through the gylte
Of the / through wicked langage to be spylte

This fayre lady on this wyse destytute
Of al comforte and consolation
Right pitously without solas wyssip or refute
Dishcueled / passed out of the toun
A myle or two vnto a mansyon
Dysed ful gay / where her father Calcas
Whiche than amōg the grekes dwellyng was

Whan he her sawe / the cause he can enquyre
Of her cōmyng / she sayd sighyng ful sore
Fro Diomede had gotten his desyre
He woxe wery and wolde of me no more
O Calius doughter / wepe thou nat therfore
Paraunture al cometh for the best
Welcome to me thou arte ful derre a gest

This olde Calcas / after the sawe was so
Was keper of the temple as a preest
In whiche Venus and her sonne Cupido
Were honoured / and his chambre was next
To whiche Cresepde with sobre mesured lyght
Used to passe / her prayers for to say
Whyle at the laste vpon a solempne day

As custome was / the people ferre and nere
Before the noone / vnto the temple went
With sacrifyce / deuout in their maners
But styl Cresepde heuy in her entent
In to the churche wolde nat her selfe present
For gyuyng of the people any demyng
Of her cyuylle fro Diomede the kyng

But passed in to a secrete oratore
Where she myght wepe her woful destyny
Behynde her backe / she closed fast the dore
And on her knees bare sel downe in hye
Upon Venus and Cupyde angerly
She cryed out / and sayd in this wyse
Alas that euer I made you sacrifyce

Ye gaue me ones a demyne respon sayle
That I shulde be the flour of loue in Troy
Now am I made an vnworthy outwayle
And al my care translated in my ioye
Who shal me gyde? who shal me now chese
Suche I fro Diomede / and noble Troylus
Am clene excluded / as abiecte abyous

O false Cupyde / none is to wyte but thou
And thy mother of loue / that vnder goddes
Ye caused me vnderstande al wrong and trowe
The seede of loue was so inly on my face
And ay grene grene thoughe yer somer grete
Out now a clowe / that fruyt with frost is fro me
And I fro ioyes lesse and al solaces

Whan

Whan this was sayd/ downe in my cytaly
Vanysshed my spirite/ my dreame fro me fel
And by aduenture herde where she cryd ful
Cuppde the kynge tullyng a fynall bel
Whiche may myght here fro henry in to hel
At whose sommde before Cuppde aperes
The seuen planetes discendyng fro theire speres

Whiche hath power of al thyng generable
To rule and stere by their great influence
Veder and wynde/ and course variable
And first of al Saturne gaue his sentence
Whiche gaue to Cupide lytel reuerence
But as a boysteous charle in his maneres
Came crabbedly with austeryus lokes & cheres

His face frounsed/ his lere was lyke the leed
His teth chattred/ and shuttred with the chyn
His eyen drouped holle sonken in his heed
But at his mouth the mydrop fast gan ryn
With lyppes blo/ and cheekes leane and thyn
The fyre percels of fro his herte dyd wne honge
Was wonder great/ and as a speare as longe

Attour his belte his sparte socken lay
Fethred vnsayre/ ouerstrect with frostes hoore
His garment and his gate ful gay of gray
His wyddred wede fro hi the wynde out woze
A boystous bowe within his honde he bor
Vnder his gyrdel a fassche of felonz flayns
Fedred with fyre/ and herded with hoistayns

Than Jupiter right fayre and amyable
God of the sterres in the fyrmament
And nowre to al thynge generable
Fro his father Saturne farre different
With burly face/ and browes bright & brent
Vpon his herd a garlonde wonderes gay
Of floures fayre/ as it had ben in May

His beare lockes clere/ as christal was his eyen
As golden wyre so glysteryng was his heare
His garment and his gyte ful gay of grene
With golden lystes gyte on euery greue
A burly brande about his myddel he beare
In his right hande he had a groundyn spere
Of his father/ the mooste fro he to here

Nexte after him came Mars the god of yre
Of stryfe/ debate/ and al dissencioun
To chide and fyght/ as fierce as any fyre
In harde harneise hehemodde and habergioun
And on his haunch a rousty fel fauchoun
And in his hande he had a rousty swerde
Wythyng his face/ with many angry werde

Shakyng his brande/ before Cupide he came
With reed visage/ a grisely glowyng eyen
And at his mouthe a blubber stode of fome
Lyke a boore/ whettyng his tuskes keyn
Right tuskare lyke/ but temperaunce in teme
An home blewe with many boystous bragge
Whych al this worlde w^t warre hath made to wagge

Than faire Phebus/ lanterne & lape of light
Of may & verst/ bothe frute and flourishyng
Tender noure/ and banysshet of nyght
And of the worlde/ causyng by his mouyng
And influence/ lyfe in al erthly thyng
Without comforte of whom of force to noust
Must go dye/ that al this worlde hath wrought

As kyng royal/ he rode vpon a chare
The whiche Pluton somtyme gyded vnright
The brightnesse of his face whan it was bare
None myght beholde/ for perfyng of his sight
His golden curle with fyry beames bright
Foure poted stedes ful different of hewe
But bayte or tyring through the speres drewe

The first was sorde/ w^t mane as reed as rose
Called Eose in to the orient
The seconde stede to name/ right Ethose
Whitely and pale/ and somdele ascendent
The thirde Perose/ right hote and ebe feruent
The fourth was blacke/ called Philologe
Whiche rolleth Phebus down into the se

Venus was there present/ that goddes gay
Her sonnes quarel to defende and make
His owne complaynt/ clad in a riper aray
The one halfe grene/ thother halfe sable blake
White here as golde/ bemet and shed a bake
But in her face semed great varyaunce
Whyle parfyte trouth/ and wyfely countenaunce

Vnder smylyng she was dissymulate
Prouocatyue with blyndes amorous
And sodaynly chaunged and alterate
Angry/ as any serpent venemous
Right pungityue with wordes odious
Thus variaunt she was who lyste take keps
With one eye laugh/ and with the other wepe

In tokenyng that al flesshly paramour
Whiche Venus hath in rule and gouernaunce
Is somtyme swete/ somtyme bytter & sour
Right vnstable and ful of variaunce
Hyraged with careful ioye and false plesaūce
Now wel hote now colde/ now blyth/ now ful of
Now grene as lefe/ now wydered & ago (wo

With boke in hande/ thā come Mercurius
Right eloquent and ful of rethoryke
With polyte termes and delycious
With penne and pulse to reporte al redy
Settyng songes/ and syngyng merely
His hode was reed hecled attour his crowne
Lyke tyl a poete of the olde fasyowne

Bayes he bare with fyne electuares
And sugred syropes for digestion
Spyces belongyng to the potiquares
With many holsome swete confection
Doctor in phisyke cledde in a scarlet gown
And furred wele as suche one ought to be
Honest and good/ and nat a worde couth lye

Neyte after hym come lady Synthia
The lasse of al/ and swyftest in her spere
Of colour blake/ bushed with hornes twa
And in the nyght she lyseth best tapere
Hawe as the leed/ of colour nothyng clere
For al the lyght she boroweth at her brother
Tytan/ for of her selfe she hath none other

Her gyte was gray and ful of spottes blake
And on her brest a chorle paynted ful euen
Bearyng a bussshe of thornes on his bake
Which for his theft must clymbe vp nere ỳ heuen
Thus whan they gadred were ỳ goddes seuen
Mercurius they chosed with one assent
To be forespeker in the parlyment

Who had ben there and hyrkyng for to here
His sarcenit langage/ and termes enbrasyte
Of rethorike the practyke he might lere
In brefe sermon/ a pregnant sentence wrate
Before Cupide valyng his cappe a lyte
Sper is the cause of al this verament
And he anon schewde his entencioun

Lo qd Cupide/ who wol blaspheme ỳ name
Of his owne god/ eyther in worde or dede
To al goddes he berthe bothe losse and shame
And shalde haue bytter paynes to his mede
I saye this by yonder wrecche Creseyde
The which thrughout the wide world hath sprad
Of my mother the slaūder vnkynde (ne

Sayeng of her great infelycite
I was the cause/ and my mother Venus
She called a blynde goddes and myght nat se
With sclaunder and desame iniurious
Thus her lyuyng lucrece and lecherous
She wolde retorte in me and my mother
To whom I shewde my grace abouē al other

And sithe ye are al seuen deesse
Participant of diuyne sapyence
This great iniure done to our hye estate
We thinke wt payne we shalde make recōpence
Was neuer to goddes done suche violence
As wel for you as for my selfe I say
Therfore go helpe to reuenge I you pray

Mercurius to Cupide gaue answere
And sayd/ sir kyng: my counsayle is that ye
Referre you to the hyest planet here
And take to hym the lowest of degree
The payne of Creseyde for to modifye
As god Saturne with his cake Synthia
I am content (qd he) to take they twa

Than thus procedeth Saturne & the moone
When they the mater ripely had digest
For the despite to Cupide that she had done
And to Venus open and manyfest
In al her lyfe with payne to be oppresst
And tourment sore with sykernesse incurable
And to al louers be abhominable

This

The doleful sentence Saturne tooke on hande
And passed do wne wher sorefull Creseyd lay
And on her head he layde a frosty wande
Than saufully on this wyse can he say
Thy great fairnesse/ and all thy beauty gay
Thy wanton blode/ and eke thy golden heere
Here I exclude fro the for euermeere

I chaunge thy mythe in to melancoly
Whiche is the mother of all pensyuenesse
Thy mayster and thy hete/ in to colde & dry
Thyne insolence/ thy play/ & thy wantonnesse
To great disease/ thy pompe and thy richesse
In to mortal nede and great penurie
Thou suffre shalte/ and as a begger dye

O carwel Saturne/ fro warde and angry
Harde is thy dome/ and to malpertuse
O/ faire Creseyde/ why hast thou no mercy
Whiche was so swete/ gentyl/ and amorous
Before we thy sentence and be gracious
As þ were neuer/ so sheweth through thy dede
A wreakeful sentence gruen on Creseyde

Than Synthia/ whan Saturne past away
Out of her seate/ discended down Selyne
And red a byl on Creseyde where she lay
Containyng this sentence diffynityue
Fro hecle of body here I the depryue
And to thy persones shalbe no recure
But in dolour thy dayes to endure

Thy chrystal eyen mersed with blode I make
Thy voice so clere vnpleasaunt hoerse and hace
Thy lusty lere ouerspred with spottes blake
And lumpes haue appering in thy face
Where thou comest eche man shal flye þ place
Thus shalte þ go begging fro house to house
With cuppe and clapper lyke a lazarouse

This dooly dreame/ this vgly visyon
Dismayde tyl an ende/ Creseyd fro it awoke
And al that cruelte and consolacion
Vanysshed away/ than rose she vp and toke
A polysshed glasse/ & her shadowe couth loke
And when she sawe her visage so defamate
Ysse in that wyse wo! I ne wyte god wate

Wepyng ful sore/ so what it is (quod she)
With fro warde langage to moue & stere
Out crabbed goddes/ and so is sent on me
Thy blaspheming now haue I bought ful dere
Al crisly rope and mythe I sette arere
Alas this day/ alas this woful tyde
Whan I began with my goddes to chyde

Be this was sayd/ a chylde came fro the hal
To warne Creseyde the supper was redy
First knocked at the doore/ and eft couth cal
Madame/ your father byddeth you cõe in hye
He hath marueyle so long on grouse ye lye
And sayth your herdes bethe to longe sandels
The goddes wote al your entente ful wele

Quod she sayre chylde/ go to my father dere
And pray him come to speke with me anone
And so he dyd/ and sayd daughter what chere
Alas (quod she) father/ my mythe is gone
Howe so (quod he) and she can al expone
As I haue tolde/ the vengeaunce & the wrake
For her trespas/ Cupide on her couth take

He loked on her vgly lepers face
The whiche before was white as lely flour
Wringyng his handes/ ofsymes sayd alace
That he had lyued to se that woful hour
For he knewe wel that there was no socour
To her sykenesse/ and that doubled his payne
Thus was ther care ynow betwix hẽ twayne

Whan they togider mourned had ful lang
Quod Creseyde/ father I wolde nat be bende
Therfore in secrete wyse ye lette me gange
To yon hospital at the townes ende
And thider some meate for charite me sende
To lyue vpon/ for al mythe in this erthe
As fro me gone/ suche is my wicked werthe

Whan in a mantel/ and a Beuer hat
With cuppe and clapper wonder pusely
He opened a secrete gate and out therat
Lanyped fer/ that no man shulde espy
There to a Spyttage hatte a myle therby
Dyscreed her in at the spyttel house
And dayly synde her parte of his almous

Some

Sōe knewe her wel & some had no knowlege
Of her/ bicause she was so deformate
With byles blake ouerspred in her visage
And her fayre colour faded and alterate
yet they presumed for her hye regrate
And styl mourning she was of noble kynne
With better wyl there they toke her inne

The day passed/ and Phebus went to rest
The cloudes blake ouerhaled al the skye
God wote if Creseyde were a sorouful gest
Seyng that vncouth fare and herborye
But meate or drinke she dressed her to lye
In a derke corner of the house alone
And on this wyse wepig she made her mone

¶ Here folowth the complaynt of Creseyde.

O Sloppe of sorowe sonken in to care
O caytife Creseyde now & euermare
Sone is thy wyte and al thy myrth in erthe
Of al blythnesse now art thou blake & barē
There is no salue may helpe thy sare
Fel is thy fortune/ wicked is thy werthe
Thy blysse is banysshed and thy bale vnberd
Vnder the great god if Iupiter ware
Wher men of Grece ne yet of Troy mixt herd

Where is thy chambre wantonly be sene
With burly bedde and bankers brouded bene
Spyces and wyne to thy solatioun
The cuppes al of golde and syluer shene
Thy swete meates serued in plates clene
With sauery sauce of a good facioun
Thy gay garmētes with many goodly goun
Thy plesaunt launne pynned w' golden pene
Al is arere thy great royal renoun

Where is thy gardeyn with thy grenes gay
And fresshe floures/ whiche the quene of Maye
Had paynted plesauntly in euery payne
Where thou were wonte ful merily in May
To walke/ and take the dewe be it was day
And here the merle and maysse many one
With ladies fayre in carolyng to gone
And se the royal renkes in their ray

This leper lope take for thy goodly bour
And for thy bedde/ take now a bonch of fus
For wasted wyne and meates thou had tho
Take mouled bred/ perate/ and syder sour
Out cuppe and clapper now ye ar ago

Thy clere voice and thy countely carolyng
Is rawhe as rose/ ful hidous here and there
Defourmed is the fygure of thy face
To loke on it no pleasyr hath lyuyng
Solped thy syght/ I say with sore sighyng
Lyeng among the leper folke alas.

O ladies fayre of Troy and Grece attende
Thy frayle fortune/ myne infelycite
Thy great myschefe which no man can amēde
And in your mynde a myrrour make of me
As I am now parauenture that ye
For al your myght may cōe to the same ende
Or elles worse if any worse may be
Beware therfore approches nere your ende

Nought is your fairnesse but a fadyng flour
Nought is your famous laude & hye honour
But wynde inflate in other mennes eares
Your rosyng reed to rosyng shal retour
Exaumple make of me in your memore
Whiche of such thinges/ wofull witnesse beares
Al welth in erthe/ as wynde away it weares
Beware therfore approcheth nere your boure

Thus chidyng with her derry destenye
Wepyng/ she woke the nyght fro ende to ende
But al in vayne her dole/ her careful cry
Might nat remedy/ ne yet her mournig mende
A leper lady rose and to her wende
And sayd/ why spurnes thou against the wal
To slee thy selfe/ and mende nothyng at al

Sithe that thy wepyng but doublyth thy wo
I counsayle the make vertue of a nede
Go lerne to clappe thy clapper to and fro
And lerne after the lawe of lepers lede
Her was no bote but footh must this she yede
Fro place to place/ whyle colde & hunger sore
Compelled her to be a ranke beggare

That

That same tyme of Troy the garnysone
Whiche had the chefteyne worthy Troylus
Through moyen of warre had fleyen downe
Kynges of Grece in manere victorious
With great triumphe/ and laude victorious
Agayne to Troy with rapelly they rode
Ese wo where Cresseyde with the lepers stode

Lepng that company come al with o fleyng
They gane a crye/ & thofe cuppes good spede
Worthy lordes/ for gobbes sake of heuyn
To be lepers/ parte of your almesse bede
Than to her crye nought Troylus toke hede
Lauyng pyte/ nare by the place gan pas
Wher Cresseyde sat/ nat wetyng what she was

Than vpon him she lyft vp bothe her eyen
And with a blynke it come in tyl his thought
That he somtyme her face before had seyn
But she was I suche plyte he knewe her nought
Yet than her sore in to his mynde he brought
The swete lyfage/ and amorous lokyng
Of fayre Cresseyde/ sometyme his owne derlyng

No wonder was/ suppose in mynde that he
Tok her figure so soone/ and so no we why
The pool of a thyng in case may lie
So depe emprynted in the fantasy
That it deludeth the wyttes outwardly
And so appereth in soune and lyke estate
Wythin the mynde/ as it was figurate

A sparke of sone than tyl his hert couth spryng
And kyndeled his body in a fyre
With hote fener/ in swette/ and trymblyng
Him toke/ whyle he was redy to expyre
To beare his shylde his brest begon to tyre
Within a whyle he chaunged many a hewe
And nenertheles nat one another knewe

For knightely pyte and memorial
Of fayre Cresseyde/ a gyrdel gan he take
A purs of golde/ and many a gay iewel
And in the stede of Cresseyde do lay can shake
Than rode away/ and nat a worde he spoke
Pensyfe in herte whyle he came to the towne
And for great care of syght almest fel downe

The lepre folke to Cresseyde than couth drawe
To se the equal distrybucion
Of ? almous/ but when the golde they sawe
Eche one to other pumely can rowne
And sayd/ yon lorde hath more affection
Ho we euer it be/ vnto yon lazarous
Than to vs al/ we knowe by his almous

What lorde is yon (qd she) haue ye no sele?
That dothe to vs so great humanyte
Yes quod a lepre man/ I knowe him wele
Sir Troylus it is/ a knyght gentyl and free
When Cresseyde vnderstode that it was he
Styffer than stele there sterte a bytter stounde
Throughout her hert/ & fyl down to the grounde

When she ouercome with sighyng sore & sadde
With many a careful crye and colde atone
Home to my brest with stormy stoundes sladde
Wrapped in wo wretch ful wyl of one
Than fel in swoun ful ofte or she wolde sone
And euer in her swownyng cryed she thus
O false Cresseyde/ & trewe knyght Troylus

Thy sone/ thy laude/ and al thy gentylnesse
I compted smal in my prosperite
So estated I was in wantonnesse
And chaunge vpon the fyckel wheles hye
Al faythe and sone I promytted to the
Was in thy false febel and furious
O false Cresseyde/ & trewe knyght Troylus

For leue of me thou lepte countenaunce
Honest and chaste in conuersation
Of al women protectour and defence
Thou were/ and helped their oppynyon
Thy mynde on flesshly foule affection
Was enclyned to lustes lecherous
Fy false Cresseyde/ o trewe knyght Troylus

Louers beware/ and take good hede about
Whom that ye sone/ for when ye fastest payne
I sette you wyte there is right fewe throughout
Whō ye may trust to haue trewe sone agayne
Proue when ye wol your labour is I sayne
Therfore I rede ye take them as ye fynde
For they are sadde as wedercocke in wynde

Dyeuse

Bycause I knowe the great vnstablenesse
Buttel as glasse/ vnto my selfe I say
Trusting in other as great sikernesse
As inconstaunt/ and as vntrewe of faye
Though some be true/ I wot nyt fewe or they
Who fyndeth truthe/ lette hym his lady ruse
None but my selfe as nowe I wol accuse

Whan this was sayd/ with pay she sat downe
And in this maner made her testament
Here I bequeth my corse and carpoun
With wormes and with toodes to be rent
My cuppe/ my clapper/ and myne ornament
And al my golde/ these lepers folke shal haue
Whan I am deed/ to bury me in graue

This royal ryng sette with this Ruby red
Whiche Troylus in dowry to me sende
To hym agayne I leaue it whan I am ded
To make my careful dethe vnto hym kende
Thus I conclude shortely and make an ende
My spirite I leaue to Diane wher she dwelles
To walke with her in waste wodes & welles

O Diomede thou hast both broche & belte
Whiche Troylus gaue me in tokenyng
Of his trewe loue/ & with ꝑ worde she swelte
And soone a leper may take of the ryng
Than buryed her withouten tarying
To Troylus fourth with the rynge he bare
And of Creseyde the dethe he can declare

Whan he had herde her great infirmite
Her legacy/ and lamentacioun
And howe she ended in suche pouerte
He swelte for wo and fel downe in a swoun
For sorowe his herte to brast was boun
Sighyng ful sadly sayde I can no more
She was vntrewe/ and wo is me therfore

Soe sayth he made a tombe of marble gray
And wrote her name and superscripcioun
And layde it on her graue where as she lay
In golden letters/ conteynyng this resoun
La fayre ladyes / Creseyde of Troy the toun
Somtyme compted the flour of womanhed
Vnder this stone/ late leper lyeth ded

Nowe worthy women in this balade shal
Made for your worshyp and instruction
Of charyte I monysshe and exhorte
Wynge not your loue with false disceyuyng
Beare in your mynde this fyne conclusyon
Of fayre Creseyde/ as I haue sayd before
Sithe she is deed/ I speke of her no more.

¶ Thus endeth the pyteful and dolorous
testament of fayre Creseyde:
and here folowyth
the legende
of good women.

The legende of good women.

Althoughsalde tymes I haue herde me tel
That there is ioy / ioyen & payn / hell
And I accorde it wele that it is so
But nathelesse yet wotte I wele also
That there vpo non dwellyng in this countre
That eyther hath in heuen or in hell yhe
Ne mepe of it none other wayes wytten
But as he herde sayd / or founde it wryttyn
For by assaye there may no man it preue
But god forbede / but men shulde leue
Bet more thyng than they han seue with eye
Wha shal nat wenen euery thyng a lye
But it hem selfe it ferth / or els it dothe
For god wote thyng is neuer the lesse sothe
Though euery wight ne may it nat yse
Bernarde the monke ne sangh al parde
Thau mote we to bookes that we fynde
(Though whethe ỳ olde thynges ben / mynde
And to the doctryne of these olde wyse)
Yeue credence / in euery resonable wyse
That telleth of these olde approued lawes
Of holynesse / of religion / of vertues
Of loue / of hate / and other sondrye thynges
Of whiche I may nat make reherynges
And if that olde bookes were away
Ylome were of remembraunce the day
Bet ought we than / honoure and beleue
These bokes / there we han noy other preue
And as for me / though ỳ I can but lyte
On bookes for to rede I me delyte
And to hem yeue I faithe and full credence
And in myne herte haue hem in reuerence
So hertely / that there is game none
That fro my bookes maketh me to gone
But it be seldome on the holyday
Saue certainly / whan ỳ the month of May
Is comen / and that I here the foules synge
And that the flowres gynnen for to spryngе
Farwel my booke / and my deuocioun
Now haue I than eke this condicioun
That of al the flowres in the mede
Than loue I most these flowres whyte & rede
Such ỳ men callen Daysies in our toun
To hem haue I so great affectioun
As I sayd erst / whan comen is the May
That in my bedde there daweth me no day
That I nam vp / and walkyng in the mede
To seen this flour ayenst the sonne sprede
Whan it vp ryseth early by the morowe
That blyssful syght softeneth al my sorowe
So glad am I / whan that I haue presence
Of it / to done it al reuerence
As she that is of al flowres flowre
Fulfylled of al vertue and honoure
And euer ylyke fayre / and freshe of hewe
And euer I loue it / and euer ylyke newe
And euer shal / tyl that myne herte dye
Al swere I nat of this / I wol nat lye
There sourd no wight hotter in his lyue
And whan that it is eue I renne blythe
Assoone as euer the sonne gynneth west
To seen this flour / how it wol go to rest
For feare of nyght / so hateth she derkenesse
Her there is playnly spred in the bughtnesse
Of the sonne / for there it wol vnclose
Alas that I ne had Englysh / ryme / or prose
Suffysaunt / this flowre to preyse aright
But helpeth ye / that han connyng and myght
Ye louers that can make of sentement
In this case ought ye be diligent
To forthren me some what in my labour
Whether ye ben with the lefe or with the flour
For wel I wote / that ye han here before
Of makyng / ropen / and lad away the corne
And I come after / gleenyng here and there
And am ful glad de / if I may fynde any ere
Of any goodly worde that ye han left
And thogh it happen me to reherse eft
That ye han in your freshe songes sayde
Forbereth me / and beth nat yuel apayde
Sithe that ye se / I do it in the honour
Of Loue : and eke in reuerence of the flour
Whom that I serue / as I haue wyt or myght
She is the clernesse and the very lyght
That in this derke worlde me wynt & leadeth
The hert / within my sorowful brest pou dredeth
And loueth so fayre / ỳ ye ben verily (deth
The maistres of my wytte / and nathyng I
By worde / my werkes / is knyt so in yo' bonde
That as an harpe obeyeth to the honde
And maketh it sowne after his fyngeryng
Right so may ye out of myne herte bryng
Such vertue / wyl as pou lyst / to langh or playe
Do ye my gyde / and lady souereyne (ne
As to myn erthly god / to pou I calle
Bothe in this worke / and my sorowes al

But

But wherfore that I spake to yow credence
To olde stories/ and doon hem reuerence
And that men musten more thyng byleue
Than men may seen at eye/ or elles preue
That shal I seyne/ whan that I se my tyme
I may nat al atones speke in ryme
Wyp besy goost/ that thurstieth alway newe
To seen this flour so yonge/ so fresh of hewe
Constrayned me/ with so gredy desyre
That in myn herte I fele yet the fyre
That made me to ryse er it were day
And this was nowe the first morowe of May
With dredeful hert/ and glad deuocion
For to ben at the resurrection
Of this floure/ whan that it shulde vnclose
Agayne the sonne/ that rose as reed as rose
That in the brest was of the beest that day
That Angenores doughter ladde away
And doune on knees anon right I me sette
And as I coulde/ this fresshe floure I grette
Kneling alway/ tyl it vnclosed was
Upon the smale/ softe/ swete gras
That was with floures swete embrouded all
Of suche swetnesse/ and suche odour ouer all
That for to speke of gome/ herbe/ or tre
Comparyson may none ymaked be
For it surmounteth plainly al odoures
And of ryche beautie al floures
For-gotten had the erthe his poore estate
Of wynter/ that him naked made and mate
And with his wordes colde so sore greued
Nowe hath the attempre sonne al that releued
That naked was/ and clad it newe agayne
The smale soules/ of the reason fayne
That of the panter and the nette ben scaped
Upon the fouler/ that hem made awhaped
In wynter/ and distroyed had her brood
In his dispyte hem thought it dyd hem good
To synge of him/ and in her songe dispyse
The foule chorle/ that for his couetyse
Had hem betrayed/ with his sophistrye
This was her songe: The fouler we defye
And al his crafte/ and some songen clere
Layes of loue/ that ioye it was to here
In worshipping and praysing of her make
And for the newe blysful somers sake
Upon the braunches ful of blosmes softe
In her delyte/ they turned hem ful ofte
And songen/ blyssed be seynt Valentyne
For on his day I chese you to be myne
Withouten repentyng/ myn herte swete
And therwithal her bekes gonnen mete
Yelding honour/ and humble obeysaunce
To loue/ and dyden her other obseruaunce
That longeth vnto loue/ and to nature
Constrewe that as you lyst/ I do no cure
And tho that had done vnsyndemesse
As dothe the Tydyse/ for newe sangelnesse
Besought mercy of her trespasyng
And humbly songe her repentyng
And sworen on the blosmes to be trewe
So that her makes wolde vpon hem rewe
And at the laste maden her acorde
Al founde they Daunger for the tyme a lorde
Yet Pyte/ through his stronge gentyl might
Forgaue/ and made mercy passen right
Through innocence/ and ruled curtesye
But I ne cleape it nat innocence solye
Ne falsse pyte/ for Vertue is the meane
As Etycke sayth/ in suche maner I meane
And thus these soules/ voyde of al malyce
Acorden to loue/ and lasten vpe
Of hate/ and songe all of one acorde
Welcome somer/ our gouernour and lorde
And Zephirus/ and Flora gentilly
Pane to the floures softe and tenderly
Her swote brethe/ and made hem for to sprede
As god and goddesse of the flowry mede
In whiche me thought I mught day by day
Dwellen alway/ the holy monthe of May
Withouten slepe/ withouten meate or drinke
Aboute ful softly I gan to synke
And leanyng on my elbowe and my syde
The longe day I shope me for to abyde
For nothyng els/ and I shal nat lye
But for to loke vpon the deysye
That wel by reason men it call may
The dayesy/ or elles the eye of the day
The emprise/ and flowre of floures all
I pray to god that fayre mote she fall
And al that louen floures/ for her sake
But natheless/ ne wene nat that I make
In praysing of the floure agayne the lese
Nomore than of the corne agayne the chese
For as to me nys leuer none ne lother
I nam with holden yet with neuer nother

Or I not who fermath frese/ me who the flour
Wel browen they her scripture as labour
For this thyng is al of another tonne
Of olde flour/er suche thyng was begonne
Whan that the sonne/out of the south gan west
And that this flour gan close/ gan to rest
For derknes of the night/ the which she dredde
Home to myn house/ ful swyftly I me spedde
To gon to reste/ and erly for to ryse
To sene this flour to spriede/ as I deuyse
And in a pleyn herber that I haue
That benched was on turues fressh ygrave
I bade men shulde me my couche make
For deyntie of the newe somers sake
I bade hem strawen flowres on my bedde
Whan I was layde/ and had myn eyen hedde
I fel a slepe/ and slepte an houre or two
The merie howe I slay in the medowe tho
To sene this flour/ that I lour so and dredde
And from a ferre came walkyng in the mede
The god of Loue/ and in his hande a quene
And she was clodde in royal habyte grene
A fret of golde she had next her heere
And vpon that a whyte crowne she beere
With floreons smal/ and I shal not lye
For al the worlde right as a daysye
Ycrowned is/ with whyte leaues lyte
So were the floreons of her crowne whyte
For of o perle fyne oriental
Her whyte crowne was ymaked all
For whych the white crowne/ abowe the grene
Made her lyke a daysye for to sene
Consydred eke her fret of golde abowe
Ylothed was this mighty god of Loue
In suche an habyte/ ful of grene greues
In whiche a fret of reed rose leues
The freshest sene the world was first begone
His gylte heere was crowned with a sonne
In stede of golde/ for heuynesse and weight
Therwith me thought his face shone so bright
That wel vnnethes might I him beholde
And in his hande/ me thought I sawe him holde
Two fyry dartes/ as the gledes rede
And angelyke his wynges sawe I spredde
And al be that men sayne/ that blynde is he
Algate me thought that he might se
For sternely on me he gan beholde
So that his lokyng dothe myn herte colde
And by the hande he held this noble quene
Crowned with whyte/ and clothed al in grene
So womanly/ so benigne/ and so mete
That in this worlde/ though that me wold sek
Halfe her beautie shulde they not fynde
In creature that formed is by kynde
And therfore may I sayne/ as thynketh me
This songe/ in praysyng of this lady fre.

Hyde Absolon thy gylte tresses clere
Hester lay thou thy meknesse al adoun
Hyde Jonathas al thy frendely manere
Penelopee/ and Marina Latoun
Make of your wyfehode no comparysoun
Hyde ye your beautes/ Isonde & Helayne
Wy lady cometh/ that al this may distayne

Thy fayre body/ let it not apere
Lauyne/ and thou Lucrece of Rome toun
And Polixene/ that boughten loue so dere
And Cleopatras/ with al thy passyoun
Hyde ye your trouthe of loue/ & your renoun
And thou Tisbe/ that hast of loue suche payne
Wy lady cometh/ that al this may distayne

Hero/ Dido/ Laodomia/ al yfere
And Phillis/ hangyng for the Demophoun
And Canace/ espyed by thy chere
Hipsyphile betrayed with Jasoun
Make of your trouth neyther boste ne soun
Nor Hypermistre/ or Ariadne/ ye twayne
Wy lady cometh/ that al this may distayne

¶ This balade may ful wel ysongen be
As I haue sayd erst/ by my lady fre
For certainly/ al these mowe not suffyse
To apperen with my lady in no wyse
For as the sonne wol the fyre distayne
So passeth al my lady souerayne
That is so good/ so fayre/ so debonayre
I pray to god that euer fayl her fayre
For nad comforte ben of her presence
I had ben dede/ withouten any defence
For drede of Loues wordes/ and his chere
As whan tyme is/ herafter ye shal here
Behynde this god of Loue vpon the grene
I sawe coming of ladyes nyne and tene
In royal habyt/ a ful easy pace

And

And after hem came of women fuche a trace
That fens that god Adam had made of erthe
The thirde parte of mankynde/or the ferthe
Ne wende I nat by poſſibylyte
Had euer in this wyde worlde ybe
And trewe of loue/theſe women were echon
Now whether was that a wōder thing or non
That right anon/as that they gonne eſpye
This floute/whiche that I clepe the dayeſye
Ful ſodaunly they ſtynten al at ones
And kneled downe/as it were for the nones
And ſongen with a vōyce/heale and honour
To trouthe of womanhede/and to this flour
That beareth our alder pruſe in fygurynge
Her whyte coronne beareth the wytneſſynge
And with that worde/acompas enuyroun
They ſytten hem ful ſoftely adown
Furſt ſate the god of loue/a ſythe his quene
With the whyte coronne/clad al in grene
And ſythen al the remenaunt/by and by
As they were of eſtate/ful curteſly
Ne nat a worde was ſpoken in the place
The montenaūce of a furlong way of ſpace
I kneling by this floure/in good entente
Abode to knowen what this people mente
As ſtyll as any ſtone/tyl at the laſte
This god of loue/on me his eyen caſte
And ſayd/who kneleth there: and I anſwerde
Vnto his aſkyng/whan that I it herde
And ſayd/ſir it am I/and come hun nere
And ſalued him. (qō he) what doeſt thou here
So nygh myn owne floure/ſo boldely
It were better worthy trewly
A worme to nighen nere my floure than thou
And why ſir (qō I) and it lyke you?
For thou (qō he) arte therto nothyng able
It is my relyke/digne and delytable
And thou my foe/t al my folke werreyeſt
And of myn olde ſeruauntes thou miſſayeſt
And hyndreſt hem/with thy tranſlacion
And letteſt folke from her deuocion
To ſerue me/and holdeſt it folye
To ſerue loue/thou mayeſt it nat denye
For in playne texte/withauten nede of glofe
Thou haſt tranſlated the Romaūt of ꝑ Roſe
That is an herelye ayenſt my lawe
And makeſt wyſe folke fro me withdrawe
And of Creſeyde/thou haſt ſayd as the lyſte
That makeſt men to women leſſe tryſte
That ben as trewe as euer was any ſtele
Of thyn anſwere auyſe the right wele
For though thou trumped haſte my fey
As other wretches haue done many a day
By ſeynt Venus/that my mother is
If that thou lyue/thou ſhalt repenten this
So cruelly/that it ſhal wel be ſene
Tho ſpake this lady/clothed al in grene
And ſayd/god right of youre curteſye
Ye mote herken if he can replye
Againſt al this/that ye haue to him meued
A god ne ſhulde nat be thus agreued
But of his deite he ſhal be ſtable
And therto gracious and merciable
And if ye nere a god/that knowen al
Than myght it be/as I you telien ſhal
This man to you may falſely ben accuſed
That as by right/him ought ben excuſed
For in your court is many a loſengeour
And many a queynt toteler accuſour
That tabouren in your eares many a ſoun
Right after her ymaginacioun
To haue your daliaunce/and for enuy
Theſe ben the cauſes/and I ſhal nat lye
Enuy is lanender of the courte alway
For ſhe ne parteth neyther nyght ne day
Out of the houſe of Cēſar/thus ſaith Dant
Who ſo that gothe al gate ſhe wol nat want
And eke peraunter for this man is nyce
He myght done it/gripyng no malyce
But for he vſeth thynges for to make
Him recheth nought/of what matere he take
Or him was boden make thylke tuy
Of ſome perſone/and durſt it nat withſey
Or him repenteth vtterly of thus
He ne hath nat done ſo grenouſly amys
To tranſlaten that olde clerkes writen
As though that he of malyce wolde endyten
Diſpyte of loue/and had him ſelf it wrought
This ſhuld aryſe/wiſe londe haue I for thought
And nat be lyke tyraunte of Lombardy
That han no reward but at tyrannye
For he that dyngē or londe is naturel
Him ought nat be tyraunt ne cruel
As is a ſeruour/to done the harme he can
He muſt thynke it is his liege man
And is his treſour/and his goode in eſer

This

This is the sentence of the philosophus
I sayng to hepe his liegge my soueryn
Without any doute that is his office
Al wol he hepe his subiectes in ech degre
As it is right and skyl/ that they be
Enhaunsed and honoured/and most dere
For they ben halfe goddes/ in this worlde here
Yet more he done bothe right to poore & ryche
Al be that her estate be nat bothe lyche
And haue of poore folke compassyon
For lo/the gentyl kynde of the lyon
For whan a flye offendeth him or byteth
He with his tayle awaye the flye smyteth
Al easily/for of his gentrye
Him deyneth nat to wreke him on a flye
As dothe a curre/or ells another beest
Thy noble corage ought ben areest
And wayen euery thyng by equite
And euer haue regarde vnto his owne degree
For sire/it is no maistrye for a lorde
To dampne a mā/without answere of worde
And for a lorde/that is ful foule to vse
And it so be/he may him nat excuse
But asseth mercy with a diedeful herte
And profereth him/right in his bare sherte
To ben right at your owne iugement
Than ought a god by shorte auysement
Lene/pdre his owne honour/and his trespace
For sythe no cause of bothe syeth in this caee
Pou ought to ben the lightlyer merrypable
Ateth your ire/ and bethe somwhat tretable
The man hath serued you of his coumynges
And forthred wel your lawe in his makynges
Al be it that he can nat wel endyte
Yet hath he made leude folke delyte
To serue you/in preysyng of your name
He made the boke/ of ryght the house of Fame
And eke the dethe of Blaunche the ducchesse
And the Parlyament of Foules/ as I gesse
And al the loue of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes/though the storie is vnknowen lyte
And many an hymne/for your holydaies
That hyghten balades/roundels/virelayes
And for to speke of other holynesse
He hath in prose translated Boece
And made the lyfe also of saynt Cecyle
He made also/gone is a great whyle
Twenty bokes of Ouydes Metamorphose
Him ought nowe to haue the lesse payne
He hath made many a ley/and many a thyng
Now we as ye be a god/ and eke a kyng
I pray Alceste/whylom quene of Trace
I asse you this may right of your grace
That ye him neuer hurte in al his lyue
And he shal sweren to you/and that blyue
He shal neuer more agylten in this wyse
But shal make as ye wol deuyse
Of women trewe in louyng al her lyse
Where so ye wol/of mayden or of wyfe
And forthren you/as moche as he myghte
Or in the Rose/or ells in Troylus
The god of Loue answerde her thus anon
Madame (quod he) it is so longe agon
That I you knewe/ so charitable and trewe
That neuer yet/sens the worlde was newe
To me ne founde I better none than ye
Yf that I wol saue my degree
I may nor wol nat werne your requeste
Al lyth in you/ dothe with him as you leste
I al forgeue without lenger space
For who so geueth a yefte or dothe a grace
Or it be tyme/ his thanke shal be the more
And demeth ye what he shal do therfore
Go thanke now my lady here (qd he)
I rose/ and downe I sette me on my kne
And sayd thus: Madame/ the god above
For pelde you that the god of Loue
Hath maked me his wrathe to forgeue
And grace so longe for to lyue
That I may knowe sothly what ye be
That haue me holpen/and put in this degree
But trewly I wende/ as in this caas
Nought haue agylte/ ne done to Loue trespas
For why/ a trewe man withouten drede
Hath nat to parten with a theues dede
Ne a trewe louer ought me nat to blame
Though that I speke a false louer foe shame
They ought rather with me for to holde
For that I of Troylus wrote or tolde
Or of the Rose/ what so myne author mente
Al gate god wotte it was myne entent
To forthren trouth in loue/ and it cherysse
And to ben ware fro falsnesse and fro vyce
By whiche ensample/this was my meanyng
And she answerd/ set be thyne arguyng
For loue ne wol nat countrepleted be

In right ne wronge/and lerne that of me
Thou haste thy grace/ & holde the right therto
Now wol I sayn what penaunce thou shalt do
For thy trespace/ vnderstonde it here
Thou shalt while þ thou lyuest yere by yere
The moste partie of thy tyme spende
In makyng of a glorious legende
Of good women/maydens/and wyues
That weren trewe in louyng al her lyues
And telle of false men that hem betrayen
That al her lyfe ne do nat but assayen
How many women they may done a shame
For vn your worlde that is now holde a game
And though the lyke nat a louer be
Spede wel of loue/ this penaunce yeue I the
And to the god of loue I shal so praye
That he shal charge his seruātes by any way
To fortheren the/and wel thy labour quyte
Go now thy way/this penaunce is but lyte
And whan this bokes made/ yeue it þ quene
On my behalfe/at Eltham/or at Shene
The god of loue gan smyle/and than he sayde
Wost thou(qd he) where this be wyfe or mayde
Or quene/ or countesse/ or of what degre
That hath so lytel pitie vnto the
That haste deserued sore for to smerte
But pyte renneth soone in gentyl herte
That mayst thou seue/she rytheth what she is
And I answerde/ nay sir so haue I blys
No more/but that I se wel she is good
That is a trewe tale by myn hoode
(qd Loue) and thou knowest wel parde
If it be so that thou anyse the
Haste thou nat in a booke in thy chestе
The great goodnesse of the quene Alceste
That turned was in to a dayesye
She that for her husbonde chese to dye
And ches to gone to hell/rather than he
And Hercules rescued her parde
And brought her out of hell agayne to blys
And I answerde agayne/and sayd yes
Now knowe I her/ & is this good Alceste
The dayesye/and myn owne hertes reste
Now fele I wel the goodnesse of thys wyfe
That bothe after her dethe/and in her lyfe
Her great bountie doubleth her renoun
Wel hath she quyt me myn affectioun
That I haue to her floure the dayesye
No wonder is though Ioue her stalworthe
As telleth Agaton/for her great goodnesse
Her whyte coloure beareth of it wytnesse
For also many vertues had she
As smal flo:rouns in her coloure be
In remembraunce of her/and in honour
Lybyssa made the dayesy and the flour
Icrowned al with white/ as men may se
And there paue to her a riche reed parke
In stede of Rubyes set amonge the whyte
Ther with this quene wexe red for shame a lyte
When she was prayed so in her presence
Than sayd Loue/ a ful great vngracyous
Was it to the/ that yiue tyme thou made
(Hyde Absalon thy tresses) in balade
That thou forgete her in thy songe to sette
Sithe that thou arte so greatly in her dette
And wost wel that vnkyndenesse is she
To any woman/ that wol louer be
For she taught al the craft of trewe louyng
And namely of wyfehode the lyuyng
And al the bounden that she ought vnto
Thy lytel wytte was thylke tyme a slepe
But now I charge the vpon thy lyfe
That in thy Legende thou make of this wyfe
When thou haste other smale ymade before
And fare now wel/ I charge the no more
But er I go/ thus moche I wol the tel
Ne shal no trewe louer come in hel
These other ladyes sytting here a rowe
Deyn in my balade/ if thou const hem knowe
And in thy bokes/ al thou shalt hem fynde
Haue hem now in thy legende al in mynde
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowyng
For here ben twenty thousande mo sytting
Than thou knowest/good women all
And trewe of loue/ for ought that may befall
Make the metres of hem as the list
I mote gon home/the sonne draweth west
To paradys/with al this companye
And serue alway the freshe dayesye
At Cleopatras I wol that thou begynne
And so forthe/ a my loue so shalt thou wynne
For let se now what man that louer be
Wol done so stronge a payne for loue as she
I wote wel that thou mayste not al it ryme
That suche louers dyd in her tyme
It were to longe to reden and to here

Suffy-

Suffyseth me thou make in this iourney
That thou returne of al her lyfe the gruge
After these olde auctoures lyuyng for to reuele
For who so shal so many a storye tel
Ner shortely or he shal to longe dwel
And with that worde my hoses gon I take
And right thus on my legende gon I make.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue.

¶ Here begynneth the legende of Cleopatras queue of Egypt.

After the dethe of Ptholome the kyng
That al Egipt had in his gouernyng
Regned his queue Cleopataras
Fyl on a tyme byfell there suche a caas
That out of Rome was sent a senatour
For to conquerry realmes and honour
Vnto the lowe of Rome/as was vsaunce
To saue the worlde at her obeysaunce
And sothe to say/ Antoninus was his name
So fyl it/ as fortune him ought a shame
Whan he was fallen in prosperyte
Rebel vnto the lowe of Rome is he
And ouer al this/ the suster of Cesare
He kepte her paramour that she was ware
And wolde algates han another wyfe
For whiche he tok with Rome a Cesar stryfe
Natheles/ for sothe this olde senatour
Was a ful worthy gentyl warryour
And of his dethe it was ful great domage
But loue had brought this mā in such a rage
And him so narowe bounden in his laas
And al for the loue of Cleopatras
That of the worlde he sette at no value
Him thought ther was nothyng to him so due
As Cleopatras/ for to loue and serue
Him thought that in armes for to sterue
In the defence of her/and of her right
The noble queue/ che soure so this knyght
Amongs his deserte/and for his chyualrye
As certainly/but if that bookes lye
He was of person/ and of gentylesse
And of discrecion/ and of hardynesse
Worthy to any knight that euer was
And she was fayre/as is the rose in May
And for to make short is the beste
Hse wayue his wyfe/ and had him as her leste
The weddyng and the feest to denyse
To me that haue ytake suche empryse
And so many a storye for to make
It were to longe/leste that I shulde slake
Of thyng that beareth more effecte a charge
For men may ouerlade a shyp or barge
And for thy/to effecte than wol I hyppe
And al the remenaunt/ I wol let it slyppe
Octauian/ that woode was of this dede
Shope him an hoste on Antony to lede
Al vtterly/for his distruction
With stoute romaynes/cruel as lyon
To shyp they went/a thus I let hem sayle
Antonius was ware/and wol nat fayle
To metem with these romaynes/if he may
Tobe the his rede/and bothe vpon a day
His wyfe and he/ and al his hoste forth went
To shyp anon/no lenger they ne stente
And in the see it happed hem to mete
Vp gothe the trumpe/a for to shoute a shete
And payren hem to sette on with the sonne
With grisly sowne/out gothe the great gonne
And hertely they hurtlen in al at ones
And fro the toppe/down cometh ꝑ gret stones
In gothe the grapenel so ful of crokes
Amonge the ropes ran the sherpe hokes
In with the polaye preaseth he and he
Behynde the maste/begynneth he to slye
And out agayne/and dunneth him ouer borde
He styrreth him vpon his speares orde
He rente the sayle with hokes sylle a sythe
He bigeth the cuppe/ a vyddeth hem be blythe
He poureth peyse vpon the hatches slyder
With pottes ful of lyme/they gon to gyder
And thus the longe day in fyghte they spende
Tyl at the laste/as euery thing hath ende
Antony is shent/and put him to the flyghte
And al his folke to go/that best go myghte
Fleeth eke the queue/withal her purple sayle
For stroke/ which ꝑ went as thicke as hayle
No wonder was/she might it nat endure
And whan that Antony sawe that auenture
Alas (qd he) the day that I was borne
Thy worshyp in this day thus haue I lorne
And for dispayre/out of his wytte he sterte
And rose him selfe anon throughout the herte

Er that he ferther went out of the place
Hys wyfe/that coulde of Cesar haue no grace
To Egypte is fled/for drede and for destresse
But herbeneth ye that spekeu of vnkyndenesse
Ye men that falsly swearen many an othe
That ye wol dye/if that your loue be wrothe
Here may ye sene of women suche a trouthe
This wofull Cleopatre hath made such routh
That there nys tonge none that may it tell
But on the morowe/ she wol no lenger dwell
But made her subtyl werkmen make a shryne
Of al the rubyes and the stones fyne
In al Egypte/that she couldе espye
And put ful the shryne of spycerie
And lete the corse enbaume/and forth she sette
This deed corse/and in the shryne it shette
And next the shryne a pyt than doth she graue
And al the serpentes that she might haue
She put hem in that graue/ & thus she seyde
Now loue/ to who my sorouful hert obeyde
So ferforthly/that fro that vnsely houre
That I you swore/to ben al frely your
I meane you/ Antonius my knyght
That neuer wakyng in the day or nyght
Ye nere out of myn hertes remembraunce
For wel or wo/for carole/or for daunce
And in my selfe/this couenaunt made I tho
That right suche as ye felten wel or wo
As ferforthe as it in my power laye
Vnreprouable vnto my wyfehod aye
The same wolde I felen/ lyfe or dethe
And thilke couenaunt/ whyle me lasteth brethe
I wol fulfyl/and that shal wel be sene
Was neuer vnto her loue a trewer quene
And with ỳ worde/naked with ful good herte
Amonge the serpentes in the pyttе she sterte
And there she chese to haue her buryeng
Anon the neddres gonne her for to stynge
And she her dethe receyueth with good chere
For loue of Antony that was her so dere
And this is storial/sothe it is no fable
Now er I fynde a man thus trewe & stable
And wol for loue his dethe so frely take
I pray god let our heedes neuer ake.

Here endeth the legende of Cleopatras/
and here folowеth the legende of
Tylbe of Babylone.

At Babilonye whylom fyl it thus
The which toun ỳ queene Semyram
Lete dyches al about/and walles make
Ful hye/of harde tyles wel ybake
There were dwellyng in this noble toun
Two lordes/ which that were of grete renoun
And woneden so nygh vpon a grene
That there nas bet a stone wal hem bytwene
As ofte in great townes is the wonne
And sothe to sayne/that one may had a sonne
Of al that londe/one of the lustyeste
That other had a doughter/the fayreste
That estwarde in ỳ world was tho dwellyng
The name of euerych/gan to other spryng
Vp wonen that were neyghbours about
For in that countrey yet withouten doute
Wayones ben ykept for ielousye
Ful straytе/leste they dydden some folye
This yonge man was cleped Piramus
Tysbe hyght the mayde (as also sayth thus)
And thus by reporte/was her name yshoue
That as they woxe in age/so woxe her loue
And certayne/as by reason of her age
There might haue ben bytwixt hem mariage
But that her fadres nolde it nat assente
And bothe in loue ylike sore they brente
That none of al her frendes might it lette
But priuely somtyme yet they mette
By sleyght/and spaken some of her desyre
As wise the glede/and hotter is the fyre
Forbyd a loue/and it is tyme so wode
This wal/which ỳ betwixt hem both stode
Was clouen a two/right fro the toppe adoun
Of olde tyme/of his foundacioun
But yet this clyfte was so narowe and lyte
It was nat sene/ dere ynough a myte
But what is that/ that loue can nat espye
Ye louers two/if that I shal nat lye
Ye founden first this lytel narowe clyfte
And with a sounde/as softe as any shryfte
They lete her wordes throughe the clyfte pace
And tolden/whyle ỳ they stoden in the place
Al her complaynte of loue/and al her wo
At euery tyme whan they durste so
Vp that one syde of the wal stode he
And on that other syde stode Tysbe
The swete soune of other to receyue
And thus her wardeyns wolde they deceyue

And

And euery day this wal they wolde therte
And wysshe to god/that it were downe bete
Thus wold they sayne/alas thou wicked wal
Through thyn enuye/ thou vs letteste al
Thy nyce thou cleuest/or fallen al a two
Or at the leste/but thou woldest so
Yet woldest thou but ones let vs mete
Or ones that we myght kyssen swete
Than were we cured of our cares colde
But natheles se/yet be we to the holde
In as moche as thou suffrest for to gone
Our wordes through thy lyme & ston
Yet ought we with the bey wel apayde
And whan these ydel wordes weren sayde
The colde wall they wolden kysse of stone
And take her leaue/& forthe they wolden gone
And this was gladsy in the euentyde
Or wonder erly/leste men it espyde
And longe tyme they wrought in this manere
Tyl on a day/whan Phebus gan to clere
Aurora with the fyrenes of her hete
Had dried vp the dewe of herbes wete
Vnto this cryste/as it was wonte to be
Come Piramus/and after come Tysbe
And plighten trouthe/fully in her fay
That yche same night to steale away
And to begyle her wardeyns euerychone
And forthe out of the cyte for to gone
And for the feldes bey so brode and wyde
For to mete in o place at o tyde
They set marbes/her metynges shulde be
There kyng Ninus was grauen/ vnder a tre
For olde paynems/ that pdolles herped
Vseden tho in feldes to bey buryed
And faste by this graue was a well
And shortly of this tale for to tell
This couenaunt was affyrmed wonder faste
And longe hem thought that the sonne laste
That it nere gone vnder the se adoun
This Tysbe hath so great affectioun
And so great lykyng Piramus to se
That whan she sawe her tyme myght be
At nyght she stale away ful pryuily
With her face ywympled subtelly
For al her frendes (for to saue her trouth)
She hath forsake alas/and that is routhe
That euer woman wolde be so trewe
To trusten man/but she the bet hym knewe
And to the tree she gothe a ful good pace
For loue made her so hardy in this case
And by the welle/adowne she gan her dresse
Alas/ than cometh a wylde lyoneesse
Out of the wodde/withouten more areest
With bloody mouthe/of stranglyng of a beest
To drinken of the well there as she sat
And whan that Tysby had espyed that
She ryst her vp/with a ful drery herte
And in a caue/with dredeful foote she sterte
For by the moone she sawe it wel withall
And as she ran/her wymple let she fall
And toke none hede/so sore she was a whaped
And eke so glad that she was escaped
And thus she sate/and surseth wonder syll
Whan that this lyoneesse hath dronke her syll
Aboute the well gan she for to wynde
And right anon the wymple gan she fynde
And with her bloody mouthe it al to rente
Whan this was done/no lenger she ne stente
But to the wodde her way thā hath she nome
And at the laste this Piramus is come
But al to longe (alas) at home was he
The moone shone/men myght wel yse
And in his way/as that he come ful faste
His eyen to the grounde adowne he caste
And in the sonde/as he beheld adoun
He sawe the steppes brode of a lyoun
And in his herte he sodainly agrose
And pale he wext/ther with his herte arose
And nere he came/ & founde the wymple torne
Alas (quod he) the day that I was borne
This o nyght wol bothe vs louers slee
How we shulde I aspyen mercy of Tysbe
Whan I am he that haue you slayne/alas
My byddyng hath you slayne in this caas
Alas/to bydde a woman gone by nyght
In place there as peryll fallen myght
And I so slowe/ alas I ne had be
Here in this place/a furlonge way er ye
Now what lyon that is in this foreste
My body mote he rente/or what beste
That wylde is/gnawen mote he myn herte
And with that worde/ he to the wymple sterte
And kyste it ofte/& wepte on it ful sore
And sayd wymple alas/there nys no more
But thou shalt fele as wel the bloode of me
As thou haste felte the bledyng of Tysbe

And with that worde/ he smote him to the hert
The bloode out of the wounde as brode sterte
As water/ whan the conduyt broken is
Nowe Tisbe/ whiche that wyste nat this
But syttyng in her drede/ she thought thus
If it so fall that my Piramus
Be comen hyther/ and may me nat fynde
He may me holden false/ and ete vnkynde
And out she cometh/ & after him gan espyen
Bothe with her herte/ and with her eyen
And thought/ I wol him telle of my drede
Bothe of the lyonesse and of my dede
And at the laste her loue than hath she founde
Beatyng with his heeles on the grounde
Al bloody/ and ther withal abakte she sterte
And lyke the wawes/ quappe gan her herte
And pale as boxe she woxe/ and in a throwe
Auysed her/ and gan him wel to knowe
That it was Piramus her herte dere
Who couldе write whiche a deedly chere
Hath Tisbe nowe/ & howe her heere she rente
And howe she gan her selfe to turmente
And howe she kyeth & swoumeth on the grounde
And howe she wept of teeres ful his wounde
Howe medleth she his blode/ with her complainte
Howe w^t her bloode/ her selues gan she paynte
Howe clyppeth she the deed corse/ alas
Howe dothe this wosful Tisbe in this caas
Howe kysseth she his frosty mouthe so colde
Who hath don this? & who hath ben so bolde
To sleen my lefe/ o spake Piramus
I am thy Tisbe/ that the calleth thus
And ther withal she kyssteth vp his heed
This wosful man/ that was nat fully deed
Whan that he herde the name of Tisbe cryen
On her he cast his heuy deedly eyen
And downe agayne/ & yeldeth vp the goste
Tisbe ryst vp/ without noyse or boste
And sawe her wymple and his empty sheth
And eke his swerde/ that him hath don to deth
Than spake she thus/ thy wosful hāde (qd she)
Is stronge ynough in suche a werke to me
For loue shal yeue me strength & hardynesse
To make my wounde large ynough I gesse
I wol the folowen deed/ and I wol be
Felawe/ & cause eke of thy dethe (quod she)
And though that nothyng saue the dethe only
Might the fro me departe trewly
Thou shalte no more departe nowe fro me
Than fro the dethe/ for I wol go with the
And nowe ye wretched lyouns fathers our
We that weren whylom chyldren your
We prayen you/ withouten more enuye
That in o graue we moten lye
Sens loue hath brought vs to this pytous ende
And right wyse god/ to euery louer sende
That loueth trewly more prosperite
Than euer had Piramus and Tisbe
And let no gentyl woman her assure
To putten her in suche an auenture
But god forbyd but a woman can
Ben as trewe and louyng as a man
And for my parte/ I shal anon it kythe
And with ꝑ worde/ his swerde she tooke swythe
That warme was of her lones bloode/ & hote
And to the herte she her seluen smote
And thus are Tisbe and Piramus ago
Of trewe men I fynde but fewe mo
In al my bokes/ saue this Piramus
And therfore haue I spoken of him thus
For it is deynte to ben men to fynde
A man that can in loue be trewe and fynde
Here map ye sene/ what louer so he be
A woman dare/ and can as wel as he.

Here endeth the legende of Tysbe of Babylone/ and here folowyth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage.

O Loue and honour Virgyle Mantuan
Be to thy name/ and I shal as I can
Folowe thy lanterne/ as thou goest byfore
Howe Eneas to Dido was forsworne
In thyn Eneyde/ and Naso wol I take
The tenour and the great effectes make
Whan Troye brought was to destruction
By grekes sleyght/ and namely by Synon
Fayning the horse offred vnto Mynerue
Through which ꝑ many a trojen must sterue
And Hector had after his dethe apered
And fyre so wode/ it might nat ben ferred
In al the noble tour of Ilion
That of the cyte was the cheefe dongeon
And al the countre was so sowe ꝑwrought
And Priamus the kyng foredone and nought

And

And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flyen away/ he rose Astanyus
That was his sone/in his right handes fledde
And on his backe he bare/and with him ledde
His olde father/cleped Anchyses
And up the way his wyfe Creusa he sees
And moche all soos we had he in his mynde
Er that he coulde his fela wshyp fynde
But at the laste/whan he had hem founde
He made hem redy/in a certayne stounde
And to the see ful faste he gan him hye
And sayleth forthe/ with al his companye
Toward Italye/as wolde destynee
But of his auenture in the see
Nyl nat to purpose for to spede of hees
For it accordeth nat to my matere
But as I sayde of hem and of Dido
Shal be my tale/tyl that I haue do
So longe he sayled in the salte see
Tyl in Libye vnneth arryued he
So was he with the tempest al to shake
And whan that he the hauen had ytake
He had a squyer was called Achates
And him of al his fela wshyp he ches
To gone with him/the countrey for to espye
He tooke with him namore companye
But forthe they gone/ & lefte his shyppes ryde
His seere and he/without en any gyde
So longe he walweth in this wyldernesse
Tyl at the laste he mette an huntaresse
A bowe in honde/and arowes had she
Her clothes cutted were vnto the knee
But she was yet the fayrest creature
That euer was yformed by nature
And Eneas and Achates she grette
And thus she to hem spake/whe she hem mette
Sawe ye (quod she) as ye han walked wyde
Any of my sustren walde you besyde
With any wylde beste/or other beest
That they haue hunted to ny this forest
Inwith vp/with arowes in her caas
Nay sothly lady (quod this Eneas)
But by thy beautie/as it thynketh me
Thou myghtest neuer erthely woman be
But Phebus sustre arte thou/as I gesse
And if so be that thou be a goddesse
Haue mercy on our labour and our wo
I nowe no goddesse sothly (quod she) tho
For mayden walketh in this countre here
With arowes & with bowe/in this manere
This is the realme of Libye/there ye bene
Of whiche that Dido lady is and quene
And shortly tolde al the occasyon
Why Dido came in to that regyon
Of whiche as nowe me lyſteth nat to ryme
It needeth nat/it nere but losse of tyme
For this is al and some/it was Venus
His owne mother/that spake with him thus
And to Cartage she bade he shulde him dight
And vanished anon out of his syght
I coulde folowe worde for worde Dergyle
But it wolde lasten al to longe whyle
This noble quene/that cleped was Dido
That whylom was the wyfe of Sytheo
That fayrer was than the vnght sonne
This noble towne of Cartage hath begonne
In whiche she reigneth in so great honour
That she was holde of al quenes flour
Of gentylleſſe/of fredom/ & of beautee
That wel was him/that might ones see
Of kynges and lordes so desyred
That al the worlde her beautie had yfyred
She stode so wel in euery wightes grace
Whan Eneas was come vnto the place
Vnto the mayſter temple of al the towne
There Dido was in her deuocioun
Ful prively his way than hath he nome
Whan he was in the large temple come
I can nat sayne/if that it be possyble
But Venus had him maked inuisible
Thus sayth the boke/ without en any lees
And whan this Eneas and Achates
Hadden in this temple ben ouer all
Than founde they depaynted on a wall
Howe Troye and al the lande distroyed was
Alas that I was borne (quod Eneas)
Through yͤ worlde our shame is kyd so wyde
Nowe it is paynted vpon euery syde
We that weren in prosperyte
Dey nowe we disclaundred/and in suche degre
No lenger for to lyuen I ne kepe
And with that worde/ he brast out for to wepe
So tenderly/that routhe it was to sene
This fresshe lady/of the cyte quene
Stode in the temple/in her estate royal
So richely/and eke so fayre with al

So yonge/ so lusty/ with her eyen glade
That if that god/ that heuen and erthe made
Wolde haue a loue/ for beaute and goodnesse
And womanhede/ trouthe/ and semelynesse
Whom shulde he louen/ but this lady swete?
There nys no woman to hym halfe so mete
Fortune/ that hath the worlde in gouernaūce
Hath sodaynly brought in so newe a chaūce
That neuer was there yet so strened a caas
For al the company of Eneas
Whiche that we wende haue lorne in the see
Armed is nought serre fro that cyte
For whiche the greatteste of his lordes/ some
By auenture ben to the cyte come
Vnto that same temple for to seke
The quene/ and of her socour her beseke
Such rendē was ther sprōg of her goodnesse
And whan they had tolde al her distresse
And al her tempest and al her harde caas
Vnto the quene appered Eneas
And openly beknewe that it was he
Who had rope than/ but his meyne
That hadden fonde her lorde/ her gouernour
The quene sawe they dyd hym suche honour
And had herde ofte of Eneas/ er tho
And in her herte had routhe and wo
That euer suche a noble man as he
Shal ben disheryted in suche degree
And sawe the man/ that he was lyke a knyght
And suffysaunt of persone and of myght
And lyke to ben a very gentyleman
And wel his wordes he besette can
And had a noble vysage for the nones
And formed wel of brawne and of bones
And after Venus/ had suche sayntesse
That no man myght be half so fayre I gesse
And wel a lorde hym semed for to be
And for he was a straunger/ somwhat she
Lyked hym the bette/ as god do boote
To some folke/ ofter newe thynge is swote
Anon her herte hath pyte of his wo
And with pyte/ loue came also
And thus for pyte and for gentylnesse
Refresshed must he ben of his distresse
She sayde certes/ that she sorie was
That he hath had suche peryl and suche caas
And in her frendly speche/ in this manere
She to hym spake/ and sayd as ye may here.

Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises
In good faythe/ al the worshyp and encrees
That I may goodly done you/ ye shal haue
Your shyppes and your meyne shal I saue
And many a gentyl worde she spake hym to
And cōmaunded her messangers to go
The same day withouten any fayle
Hys shyppes for to seke/ and hem vitayle
Ful many a herst she to the shyppes sent
And with the wyne she gan hym to present
And to her ropal paleys she her spedde
And Eneas alway with her she ledde
What nedeth you the ferstes to discryue
He neuer better at ease was in his lyue
Ful was the ferst of deynties and rychesse
Of instrumentes of songe/ and of gladnesse
And many an amorous lokyng and deuyse
This Eneas is come to Paradyse
Out of the swolowe of hel/ and thus in ioye
Remembreth hym of his estate in Troye
To dauysyng chambres ful of paramentes
Of ryche beddes/ and of pauimentes
This Eneas is ledde after the meete
And with the quene whan that he had sete
And spyces parted/ and the wyne agon
Vnto his chambre was he ladde anon
To take his ease/ and for to haue his reste
With al his folke/ to done what so hem leste
There nas courser wel ybridled none
Ne stede for the iustyng wel to gone
Ne large paulstrey/ easy for the nones
Ne iewel sitt ful of ryche stones
Ne sacbes ful of golde/ of large wyght
Ne rubp none that shyneth by nyght
Ne gentyl hauteyn faukon heroneres
Ne hounde for herte/ wylde boris/ or dere
Ne cuppe of golde/ with floreyns newe ybette
That in the londe of Libye may ben gette
That Dido ne hath it Eneas yfent
And al is payed/ what that he hath spent
Thus can this honorable quene her gestes al
As she that can in fredom passen al
Eneas fothely ete/ without lees
Hath sent to his shyppe by Achates
After his sonne/ and after ryche thynges
Bothe cepture/ clothes/ brooches/ & eke ryngres
Some for to weare/ and some to presente
To her/ that al these noble thynges hym sente

And

And bade his sonne how that he shulde make
The presentyng/and to the quene it take
Prepayred as this Achates agayne
And Eneas ful ioyfful is and fayne
To sen his ponge sonne Ascanyus
For to him it was reported thus
That Cupido/that is the god of loue
At prayer of his mother hye a boue
Had the lyknesse of the childe ytake
This noble quene enamoured for to make
On Eneas/wat of that scripture
Be as be may/I make of it no cure
But soth is this/ỹ quene hath made such chere
Vnto this childe/that wonder is to here
And of the presente that his father sent
She thanked him ofte in good entent
Thus is this quene in pleasaunce and ioye
With al these newe lusty folke of Troye
And of the dedes hath she more enquired
Of Eneas/and al the stoure lered
Of Troy/and al the longe day they twey
Entendeden for to spekē and for to pley
Of whiche there gan to breden suche a fyre
That sayn Dido hath nowe suche desyre
With Eneas her newe geste to dealē
That she loste her hewe and eke her healē
Nowe to theffecte/nowe to the fruite of al
Why I haue tolde this stoure/and tellen shall
Thus I begynne/it fell vpon a nyght
Whan that the moone vpreysed had her lyght
This noble quene vnto her reste wente
She syghteth sore/and gon her selfe turmente
She waketh/walweth/and made many braide
As done these louers/as I haue herde sayde
And at the laste/vnto her susser Anne
She made her mone/and thus spake she thā
Nowe dere susser myn/what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreme (quod she)
This yonge newe troyan is so in my thought
For that me thynketh he is so wel ywrought
And eke so lyuely to ben a man
And therwith so myche good he can
That al my loue and lyste lythe in his cure
Haue ye nat herde him tel his auenture
Nowe certes Anne/if that ye rede me
I wol fayne to him ywedded be
This is theffecte/what shulde I more seyne
My sory lyste al/to do me leue or deyne

Her susser Anne/an she that couthe her good
Sayd as her thought/and somdele it withstode
But here of was so longe a sermonyng
It were to longe to make rehersyng
But fynally/it may nat be withstonde
Loue wol loue/for no wight wol it wonde
The dawnyng vp ryst/out of the se
This amerous quene chargeth her meyne
The nettes dresse/and speares brode a lene
Ay huntyng wol this lusty fresshe quene
So prayeth her this newe iolyf wo
To house is al her lusty folke ygo
Vnto the courte the houndes ben ybrought
And vp on courser swyfte as any thought
Her ponge knyghtes heuen al aboute
And of her women eke an huge route
Vpon a thicke palfray/paper whyte
With sadell tred/enbroudered with delyte
Of golde the barres/vp embossed hygh
Sate Dido/al in golde and perrey wrought
And she is fayre/as is the bright morowe
That healeth sicke folkes of nightes sorowe
Vpon a courser/startlyng as the fyre
Ben myght turne him with a lytel wyre
But Eneas/lyke Phebus to deuyse
So was he fresshe araped in his wyse
The pomp bridel/with the bytte of golde
Gouerneth he right as him selfe hath wolde
And forthe this noble quene/this lady ryde
On huntyng/with this troyan by her syde
The herde of hartes/founden is anon
With hey gouet/pursue thou/let goon/let goon
Why nyl the lyon comen or the beare
That I might him once meten with this speare
Thus sayne this ponge folke/and vp they hyl
The wylde hartes/and hane hem at her wyl
Amonge al this/the rombleth gan the heuen
The thonder rored with a grisly steuen
Down come ỹ rayne/with hayle and slet so fast
With heuens fyre/that made so sore agast
This noble quene/and also her meyne
That eche of hem was glad away to flye
And shortly fro the tempest her to saue
She fledde her selfe/in to a lytel caue
And with her went this Eneas also
Ynot with hem if there wente any mo
The auctoure maketh of it no mencion
And here began the depe affection

Betwyxt

Betwixt hem two this was the first morowe
Of her gladnesse/& gynnyng of her sorowe
For there hath Eneas ywriten so
And tolde her al his hurte and al his wo
And swore so depe to her to be trewe
For wel or wo/and chaunge for no newe
And as a false louer/so wel can playne
That sely Dido trewed on his payne
And toke him for husbōde/& became his wyfe
For euer more/whyle that hem lasteth lyfe
And after this/whan that the tempest stente
With myrth out as they came/hom they wente
The wicked fame vp rose/and that anon
How Eneas hath with the quene ygon
In to the caue/and demed as hem lefte
And whan the king (ꝑ Yarbas hyght) it wyst
As he that had her loued euer his lyfe
And wowed her to haue to his wyfe
Such sorowe as he hath maked/& suche chere
It is a ruthe and pyte for to here
But as my soule/alday it happeth so
That one shal laughen at anothers wo
Nowe laugheth Eneas/and is in hope
And more ryches/than euer was in Trope
O sely woman/ful of innocence
Ful of pyte/of truthe/and conyncence
What maked you to men to trusten so?
Haue ye suche routhe vpon her sayned wo
And haue suche olde ensamples you before
Se ye nat al howe they ben forsworne
Where se ye one/that he ne hath laste his leste
Or ben vnkynde/or done her some mischefe
Or pylled her/or bosted of his dede
ye may as wel it sene/as ye may rede
Take hede nowe of this great gentylman
This tropay/that so wel her pleasen can
That sayneth hem so trewe and obeysyng
So gentyl/and so prouy of his doyng
And can so wel done al his obeysaunce
To her/at feestes and at daunce
And whan she gothe to temple/& home again
And fasten tyl he hath his lady seyn
And beareth in his deuyses for her sake
Not I nat what/and songes wolde he make
Justen/and don of armes many thynges
Sende her letters/tokens/brothes/& rynges
Now herkeneth howe he shal his lady serue
There as he was in peryll for to sterue
For hunger and for mischefe in the se
And desolate/and stroke fro his countree
And alhis folke with tempest al to dasshed
She hath her body and eke her realme ywasshed
In to his honde/there she myght haue bene
Of other lande than of Cartage a quene
And lyued in ioy ynough/what wold ye more
This Eneas/that hath thus depe ywoxe
In wery of his craftes within a throwe
The hote ernest is al ouer blowe
And prinkely he dothe his shyppes dight
And shapeth him to steale away by nyght
This Dido hath suspection of this
And thought wel that it was al amys
For in his bedde he sythe a nyght and syketh
She asketh him anon/what him mysseth
My dere herte/whythe that I lome mysse
Certes (qd̄ he) this nyght my sely ghoste
Hath in my slepe/me so sore tormented
And eke Mercury his message hath presented
That nedes to the conquest of Italye
My destyne is sone for to sayle
For whiche me thynketh/brosten is myn herte
Ther with his false terres out they sterte
And taketh her within his armes two
Is that in ernest (qd̄ she) wol ye so
Haue ye nat sworne/to wyfe me to take
Alas/what woman wol ye of me make?
I am a gentyl woman/and a quene
Ye wol not so fro your wyfe thus soule flene
That I was borne alas/what shal I do?
To tellen in shorte/this noble quene Dido
She seketh halo wes/and dothe sacrifyce
She kneleth/cryeth/that routhe is to deuyse
Conjureth him/and proferreth him to be
His thral/his seruaunt/in the best degre
She falleth him to foote/and swoneth there
Discheuyle with her bought gylte here
And sayth/haue merry/let me with you ryde
These lordes/whiche that wonnen me besyde
Wol me destroyen onely for your sake
And ye wol me nowe to wyfe take
As ye haue sworne/than wol I yeue you leue
To sleen me with yo[ur] swerde/now sone at eue
For than yet shal I dyen as your wyfe
I am with childe/and yeue my childe his lyfe
Merry lorde/haue pyte in your thought
Lat al this thyng amayseth her nyght nought

Eu

And as a traytour fro the gan to fayle
Towarde the large countre of Thayle
And thus hath he lafte Dido in woo & pyne
And wedded there a lady hyght Rayne
A clothe he lafte/ and eke his swerde sittyng
Whan he fro Dido stale in her slepyng
Right at her beddes herd/so gan he flye
Whan that he stale away to his naupe
Whiche clothe/whan sely Dido gan awake
She hath it kyste ful ofte for his sake
And sayd/o swete clothe/whyle Jupiter it lefte
Take my soule/unbynde me of this unrefte
Thaue fulfylled of fortune al the course
And thus alas/ withouten his socourse
Twenty tyme pswouned hath she thanne
And whan that she unto her suster Anne
Complayned had/ of whych I may nat write
So great routhe Thaue it for to endyte
And bade her nouce and her sustren goon
To fetchen fyre/and other thynges anoon
And sayd that she wolde sacrifyse
And whan she mighte her tyme wel aspye
Upon the fyre of sacrifyce she sterte
And with his swerde she rofe her to the herte
But as myn auctour sayth/yet thus she seyde
Or she was hurte/before or she deyde
She wrote a letter anoon/and thus began
Right so (quod she) as the whyte swan
Ayenst his dethe begynneth for to synge
Right so to you I make my complaynyng
Not that I trowe to getten you agayne
For wel I wote it is al in vayne
Sens that the goddes ben contrarious to me
But syn my name is lost through you (qd she)
Imay wel lese a worde or you or letter
Al be it/I shal be neuer the better
For thilke wynde that blewe your shyp away
The same wynde hath blowe away your say
But who so wol al this lettre haue in mynde
Rede Ouyde/and in him he shal it fynde.

Here endeth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage: And here followeth the legende of Hypsiphile and Medea.

Thou rote of falsе loueres/ duke Jason
Thou sterre/deuourer/ and confusyon
Of gentyl women/gentyl creatures
Thou madest thy resaymyng and thy lures
To ladyes of thy feathlyche apparaunce
And of thy wordes farsed with plesaunce
And of thy sayned trouthe/and thy mancre
With thyn obeysaunce and humble chere
And with thyn counterfeyted payne and wo
There other falsen one/ thou falsed two
O ofte swore thou/that thou woldest dye
For loue/whan thou ne feltest maladye
Saue soule delyte/whiche thou calleste loue
If that I lyue/thy name shal be shoue
In englysshe/that thy discreyte shal be knowe
Haue at ꝑ Jason/now thyn honour is blowe
But certes/it is bothe routhe and wo
That loue with falsе loueres werketh so
For they shal haue wel better loue and chere
Than he that hath bought loue ful dere
Or had in armes many a blody bope
For euer as tender a capon eateth the foye
Though he be falsе/ it hath the soule betrayde
As shal the good man that therfore payde
Although he haue to the capon ſeyl and right
The falsе foye wol haue his parte at nyght
Ou Jason this ensample is wel pfene
By Hypsiphile/and Medea the quene
In Thessalye/as Ouyde telleth vs
There was a kynge that hight Pellias
That had a brother/whiche that hight Eson
And whan for age he might vnnethes goon
He gaue to Pellias the gouernyng
Of al his reigne/and made hym lorde & kyng
Of whiche Eson/this Jason getten was
That in his tyme/in al that lande there nas
Nat suche a famous knyght of gentylesse
Of fredom/of strength/and of lustynesse
After his fathers dethe he bare hym so
That there nas none that kyste ben his foe
But dyd hym al honour and companye
Of whiche this Pellias hath great enuye
Imagynyng/that Jason might be
Enhaunsed so/and put in suche degre
With loue of lordes of his regyoun
That from his reigne/he may be put adoun
And in his wytte a nyght compassed he
How Jason might best distroyed be

With

Withouten sclaunder of his compasment
And at the laste he tolde auysement
That to sendeth him in to some ferre countre
There as this Jason maye distroyed be
This was his wytte/ al made he to Jason
Great chere of lode/ and of affection
For drede lest his lordes it espyde
So syl it/ as same renneth wyde
There was suche typing ouer al/ a suche loos
That in an Ile/that called was Lescos
Beyonde Trope est warde in the see
That there was a ram/that men might se
That had a flees of golde/that shone so bright
That no where was there suche another syght
But it was kepte al way with a dragoun
And many other merualles vp and doun
And with two bulles/maked al of bras
That spytten fyre/ a moche thyng there was
But this was eke the tale nathelees
That who so wolde wynnen thylke flees
He muste bothe/or he it wynne myght
With the bulles and the dragon fyght
And kyng Otes/ lorde was of that yle
This Pelleus bethought vpon this wyle
That he his neuewe Jason wolde exhorte
To saylen to that londe/him to disporte
And sayd/neuewe if it myght be
That suche worshyp might fall the
That thou this famous treasore myght wyn
And bring it my region within
It were to me great plesaunce and honour
Than were I holde to quyte thy labour
And al the costes I wol my selfe make
And chose what folke thou wolt with the take
Let se nowe/darste thou taken this voyage
Jason was ponge/and lusty of corage
And vndertoke to done this ylke empryse
Anon Argus his shyppes gan deuyse
With Jason wente the stronge Hercules
And many another/that he with him ches
But who so asketh/who is with him gon
Let him rede Argonautycon
For he wyl tel a tale longe ynough
Philocteres anon the sayle vp drough
Whan the wynde was good/ a gan him hye
Out of his countre/called Thessalye
So longe he sayled in the salte see
Tyl in the yle of Lemnon arryued he

Al be this not rehersed of Guydo
yet sayth Duyde in his epystles so
And of this yle lady was and quene
The fayre ponge Hypsiphile the shene
That whilom Thoas doughter was the kyng
Hypsiphile was gon in her playeng
And romyng on the cliffe by the see
Vnder a vawte anon espyed she
Where lay the shyppe/that Jason gan aryue
Of her goodnesse adoune she sendeth blyue
To weten/if that any straunge wyght
With tempest thyder were yblowe anyght
To done him socoure/as was her vsaunce
To furtheren euery wight/and don plesaunce
Of very bountie/and of curtesye
This messanger adoune him gan to hye
And sounde Jason and Hercules also
That in a cogge to londe were ygo
Hem to refresshen/and to take the ayre
The morwyng attempre was and fayre
And in her way this messanger hem mette
Ful conuyngly these lordes two he grette
And dyd his message/asking hem anon
If that they were broken/ or aught wo begon
Or had nede of lodesmen/or vitayle
For socoure they shulde nothyng fayle
For it was vtterly the quenes wyll
Jason answerde meekly and styll
Wyl lady (quod he) thanke I hertely
Of her goodnesse/ vs nedeth trewly
Nothyng as nowe/but that we weery be
And come for to play out of the see
Tyl that the wynde be better in our way
This lady roweth by the cliffe to play
With her meyne/endlonge the stronde
And fyndeth this Jason/ a this other fronde
In spekyng of this thyng/as I you tolde
This Hercules and Jason gan beholde
How we that the quene it was/ a sayre her grete
Anon right as they with this lady mette
And she tolde hede/and knewe by her maneres
By her array/by wordes/and by chere
That it were gentyl men of great degre
And to the castel with her ledeth she
These straunge folke/ a doth hem great honour
And asketh hem of trauayle and of labour
That they haue suffred in the salte see
So that within a daye/ two or thre

She knewe by the fatike þ in his shyppe he
That it was Jason/ ful of trouthe
And Hercules/that had the great loos
That sought after the aventures of Colcos
And dyd hym honour/more than before
And with hym dealed euer longe as more
For they ben worthy folke without lees
And namely more she spake with Hercules
To him her herte bare/she shulde be
Bothe/ wyfe/ and trewe/ of wordes and dede
Without any other affection
Of loue/or any other ymagynacion
This Hercules hath this Jason prayed
That to the sonne he hath it vp reysed
That haste so trewe a may there nas of loue
Vnder the cope of heuen/that is aboue
And he was wyse/hardy/secrete/and vyche
Of thewes that pertein/there nas non hym lyche
Of fredom passed he/and lustyhede
Al tho that yerth/or ben berd
Therto so great a gentyl man was he
And of Thessalye/iustyce kyng to be
Ther nas no lacke/but that he was agaste
To loue/and for to speke shamefaste
Hym had leuer hym selfe to murdre and dye
Than that men shulde a louer hym clepe
As wolde god that I had yeuen
My herte and flesshe/so that I might lyue
With þ nonne/that he had aught wher a wyfe
For his estate/for suche a lusty lyfe
She shulden lede/ with this lusty knyght
And al this was compassed on the nyght
Betwyxe hym Jason/and this Hermines
Of these two here was a shrude lees
To come to house/vpon an innocent
For to be bete this queme was her entent
And Jason is as cope as is a maydē
He loueth priuely/but naught he saydē
Wel frely yaue he to her counsayllers
Ieftes great/and to her officers
As wolde god that I seyden had and tyme
Descryue/al his woynge for to ryme
But in this house/ if any false soule be
Right as hym selfe no wo bestle/right so dyd he
Wel fayneng/and with euery iustyl dede
Ye gyl no more of me/but ye wol rede
Thongyual/that telleth al the caas
The sothe is this/that Jason wedded was
Vnto this quene/and toke of her ful faire
What so hym lyst/vnto his purueyance
And vpon her begate children two
And drough his shame/and saw her neuer mo
A letter sent she him certayne
Whiche were to longe to write and to sayne
And him reproueth of his great vntrouthe
And prayeth him on her to haue some routhe
And on his children two/she sayd him this
That they be lyke of al thyng pwis
To Jason/sauf they couthe nat begyle
And prayed god/ or it were longe whyle
That she that had his herte pryue her fro
Muste synden him vntrewe also
And that she muste bothe her children spyl
And al tho that suffreth him his wyl
And trewe to Jason was she al her lyse
And euer kepte her chaste/ as for his wyfe
Ne neuer had she hope at her herte
But bred for his sone of sorowes smerte
To Colcos come is this duke Jason
That is of sone deuourer and dragon
As Mayne appeteth some al wape
And from some to some it passen may
Or as a welle that were botomles
Right so can Jason haue no pees
For to desyren through his appetyte
To done with gentyl women his delyte
Thus is his lustes/ and his felyte
Jason is roomed forthe to the eyte
That whylom cleped was Jasonpreos
That was the maister to wne of al Colcos
And hath ystolde the cause of his comyng
Vnto Otes/ of that countrey kyng
Prayeng him that he muste done his assay
To gete the fleese of golde/ if that he may
Of whiche the kyng assenteth to his boone
And dothe him honour/ as it is to doone
So ferforth/ that his doughter and his heyre
Medea/whiche that was so wyse and fayre
That sayden sothe there neuer man with eye
He made her bone to Jason companye
At meate/ and sytte by him in the hal
Nowe was Jason a semely man with al
And hyde a lorde/ and had a great renoun
And of his folke as royal as a kyng
And goodly of his speche/ and famylyere
And conde of lone al the craft z arte plenere

Thus

Withouten booke/ with entriche aduenture/
And as fortune her ought a foule myschaunce
She woxe enamored vpon this man
Jason (qd she) for ought I se or can
As of this thyng/ the whiche ye ben about
Ye and your self I putte in moche doute
For who so wol this auenture atcheue
He maye nat wele asterten/ as I leue
Withouten dethe/ but I his helpe be
But nathelesse/ it is my wyl (quod she)
To forthren you/ so that ye shal nat dye
But tourney founde home to your Thessaly
Wyth right lady (quod this Jason) tho
That ye haue of my dethe or my wo
Any regarde/ and done me this honour
I wote wel that my myght/ ne my labour
Maye nat deserue it in my lyues day
God thanke you/ there I ne can ne may
Your man am I/ and so wyl you beseche
To ben my helpe/ without[en] more speche
But certes for my dethe shal I nat spare
Tho gan this Medea him declare
The peryl of this case/ fro poynt to poynt
Of his batayle/ and in what disioynt
He mote stonde/ of whiche no creature
Saue onely she/ ne myght his lyfe assure
And shortely/ right to the poynt for to go
They ben accorded fully betwixe hem two
That Jason shal her wedde/ as trewe knight
And terme yset to come soone at nyght
Vnto her chambre/ and make there his othe
Vpon the goddes/ that he for lese or lothe
Ne shulde her neuer falsen nyght ne day
To ben her husbonde whyle he lyue may
As she that from his dethe him saued here
And her vpon at nyght they mette yfere
And doth his othe/ and goth with her to bedde
And on the morowe vpwarde he him spedde
For she hath taught hi how he shal nat faile
The fleese to wynne/ and stynten his bataile
And saued him his lyfe/ and his honour
And gate him a name/ as a conquerour
Right through the sleight of her enchantment
Now hath Jason the fleese/ & home is went
With Medea/ and treasoure ful great wonne
But vnwyst of her father she is gonne
To Thessalye/ with dude Jason her lefe
That afterwarde hath brought her to mischefe
For as a traytour he is from her go
And with her lefte yonge children two
And falsely hath betrayed her/ alas
And euer in loue a cheste traytour he was
And wedded yet the thirde wyfe anon
That was the doughter of kynge Creon
This is the meede of louynge and guerdon
That Medea receyued of dude Jason
Right for her trouth/ and for her kyndnesse
That loued him better than her selfe I gesse
And lefte her father/ and her heritage
And of Jason this is the vassalage
That in his dayes nas neuer none yfounde
So false a louer/ goynge on the grounde
And therfore in her letter thus she sayde
Just whan she of his falsnesse hi vnbrayd
Why lyked me thy yelowe heer to se
More than the boundes of myne honestee?
Why lyked me thy youth and thy fairnesse
And of thy tonge/ the infinite graciousnesse
O hadeste thou in thy conquest dred ybe
Ful mysel vntrouth had there dyed with the
Wel can Ouyde her letter in verse endyte
Whiche were as now to longe for to write.

¶ Here endeth the legende of Hipsyphile and Medea: And here folowyth the legende of Lucrece of Rome.

NOw mote I sayn theyl yng of slges
Of Rome/ for her horrible doynges
Of the laste kynge Tarquinius
As saith Ouyde/ and Tytus Lyuius
But for that cause tel I nat this storye
But for to playsen/ and dilaten memorye
The very wyse/ the very Lucresse
That for her wyschode/ and her stedfastnesse
Nat onely that these paynyms her cõmende
But that cleped is in our legende
The great Austyn/ that hath compassyoun
Of this Lucrece that starfe in Rome toun
And in what wyse/ I wol but shortly treat
And of this thyng I touche but the great
Whan Ardea besiegd was about
With Romayns/ that ful sterne were & stout
Ful long laye the siege and syrel wrought
So ỳ they were half ydel/ as hem thought

And

And in the playe Tarquinius the ponge
Gan for to rape/ for he was fyghe of ponge
And sayd/ that it was an yuel ipse
So many dyd there more than his wyfe
And let vs speke of wymen/ that is best
Prayse euery man his owne as him leste
And with our spethe let vs ease our herte
I synght (that fyght Colatyn) vp sterte
And sayd thus/ nay sir it is no nede
To trowen on the worde/ but on the dede
I haue a wyfe (quod he) that as I trowe
Is holden good of al that euer her knowe
Go we to Rome to nyght/ and we shal se
Tarquynius answerde/ that lyketh me
To Rome be they come/ and fast hem dight
To Colatyns house/ and do wene they light
Tarquynius/ and eke this Colatyne
The husbonde knewe the estres wel and syne
And sul pauely in to the house they gone
Nor at the gate/ porter was there none
And at the chambre doore they abyde
This noble wyfe sate by her beddes syde
Discheuelled/ for no maner she ne thought
And soft wolle saith Liuy that she wrought
To kepen her fro slouthe and ydelnesse
And bade her seruauntes done her besynesse
And asketh hem/ what tydinges herey ye?
How sayth men of the siege/ how we shal it be?
God wolde the walles were fallen adowne
Thy husbonde is to longe out of thes towne
For whiche drede dothe me so to smerte
Right as a swerde/ it stynghth to myn herte
Whan I thynke on this or of that place
God sauue my lorde/ I pray him for his grace
And ther withal ful tenderly she gan wepe
And of her werke she toke no more kepe
But meekely she let her eyen fall
And thylke semblante sate her wel withal
And eke her terres ful of heupnesse
Embelished her wyfely chastnesse
Her countenaunce is to herte dogne
For they acorden in dede and synne
And with that worde her husbonde Colatyn
Or she of him was ware/ came sterting in
And sayd/ drede the nat for I am here
And she anon vp rose/ with ioyful chere
And kyssed him/ as of wyues is the wonne
Tarquinius/ this proude kynges sonne
Conceyued hath her beautie and her chere
Her yelowe heere/ her bountie/ & her maneres
Her hewe/ her wordes/ that she hath displayned
And by no craste her beautie was nat fayned
And caught to this lady suche desyre
That in his herte he brent as any fyre
So woodly/ that his wytte was al forgotey
For wel thought he she shulde nat be gotey
And aye the more he was in dispayre
The more coueyteth/ and thought her fayre
His blynde lust was al his coueityng
On morowe/ whan the byrde began to synge
Unto the siege he cometh ful puncly
And by him selfe he walketh soberly
The ymage of her recordyng alway newe
Thus lay her heer/ & thus fresh was her hewe
Thus sate/ thus spak/ this was her chere
Thus sayde she was/ & this was her maners
Al this conceyte his herte hath newe ytake
And as the see/ with tempest al to shake
That after whan the storme is al ago
Yet wol the water quappe a day or two
Right so/ though that her forme were absente
The plesaunce of her forme was presente
But natheleste nat plesaunce/ but delyte
Or any vnrightful talent with dispyte
For maugre her/ she shal my lemman be
Hap helpeth hardy man alway (quod he)
What ende that I make/ it shal be so
And gyrte him with his swerde/ & gan to go
And he forthe right/ tyll to Rome he come
And al alone his way that he hath nome
Unto the house of Colatyne ful rpght
Down was the sone/ & day hath lost his lyght
And in he come/ vnto a preuy halle
And in the night ful thelely gan he stalke
Whan euery wight was to his rest brought
Ne no wight had of treason suche a thought
Whether by wyndowe/ or by other gyn
With swerde ydrawe/ shortly he cometh in
There as she lay/ this noble wyfe Lucresse
And as she woke/ her bedde she felte presse
What berst is that (quod she) that wayeth thus
I am the kynges sonne Tarquynius
(Quod he) but & thou crye/ or any noyse make
Or if thou any creature awake
By thilke god/ that formed man of synne
This swerde through thyn herte shal I ryue

And therwithal/vnto her throte he sterte
And sette the swerde al sharpe on her herte
No worde she spake/she hath no myght therto
What shal she sayne/her wytte is al ago
Right as a wolfe that sayneth a lambe alone
To whom shal she cõplayne or make mone
What/shal she fyght with ay hardy knyght
Wele wotte men a woman hath no myght
What/shal she crye/or howe shal she astert?
That hath her by the throte wt swerd at herte
She asketh grace/and sayd al that she can
No wolte thou nat (qõ this cruel man)
As wisely Jupiter my soule saue
I shal in the stable slee thy knaue
And kepe him in thy bedde/and soude crye
That I the fynde in suche auoutry
And thus thou shalt be deed/and also lese
Thy name/for thou shalt nat chese
This romayns wyues loueden so her name
At thilke tyme/and dredden so the shame
That what for fere of slaũder/& drede of deth
She loste bothe at ones wytte and brethe
And in a swoughe she lay/& woye so deed
Men mighten smyte of her arme or heed
She seleth nothing/neyther soule ne sayne
Tarquinius/that arte a kynges heyre
And shuldest/as by kynage and by right
Done as a lorde/and a very knyght
Why hast thou don dispyte to chualrye?
Why hast thou done thy lady vilanye?
Alas/of the this was a villaynous dede
But nowe to the purpose/in the storye I rede
Whan he was gone/& this mischaũce is fall
This lady sent after her frendes all
Father/mother/& husbonde/al yfere
And discheueled with her heere clere
In habyt suche as women vsed tho
Vnto the burieng of her frendes go
She sate in hall/with a sorouful syght
Her frendes asken what her ayleth might
And who was deed/and she sate aye wepyng
A worde for shame ne maye she forthout bring
Ne vpon hem she durste nat beholde
But at the laste of Tarquiny she hem tolde
This ruful case/and al this thyng horrible
The wo to tel/were impossible
That she and al her frendes make at ones
Al had folkes hertes ben of stones
It might haue maked hem vpon her rewe
Her herte was so wisely and so trewe
She sayd/that for her gylt ne for her blame
Her husbonde shulde nat haue the foule name
That wolde she nat suffrey by no waye
And they answerde al vnto her saye
That they forgaue it her/for it was right
It was no gylt/it lay nat in her myght
And sayden her samples many one
But al for naught/for thus she sayd anone
Be as be may (quod she) of forgyuyng
I wyl nat haue no forgyfte for nothyng
But priuely she caught forth a knyfe
And therwithal she raste her selfe her lyfe
And as she fell adowne/she caste her lose
And of her clothes/yet hede she tooke
For in her fallyng/yet she had a care
Leste that her fete/or suche thynges lay bare
So wel she loued clennesse/and eke trouthe
Of her had al the towne of Rome routhe
And Brutus hath by her chaste bloode sworne
That Tarquyn shulde ybanusshed be therfore
And al his kynne/and let the people call
And openly the tale he tolde hem all
And openly let carry her on a bere
Through al the towne/that men may se & here
The horryble dede of her oppressyoun
Ne neuer was there kyng in Rome toun
Sens thilke day/and she was holden there
A saynte/and euer her day yhalowed dere
As in her lawe: and thus endeth Lucresse
The noble wyfe/Titus bereth wytnesse
I tell it for she was of loue so trewe
Ne in her wyl she chaunged for no newe
And in her stable herte/sadde and kynde
That in these women men may al day fynde
Here as they caste her herte/there it dwelleth
For wel I wote/that Crist him selfe telleth
That in Israel/as wyde as is the lande
That so gret fayth in al the londe he ne fonde
As in a woman/and this is no lye
And as for men/loke ye suche tyrannye
They done al day/assay hem who so lyste
The treweste is ful vntrel for to tryste.

Here endeth the legende of Lucrece of Rome/& here foloweth the legende of Ariadne of Athenes.

Dge infernal Pynos of Crete kyng
Now cometh thy lotly cursed ofspryng
That for thy sake entry wretten is thus fore
But for to escape apery vnto memorie
Of Theseus the great vntreuth of loue
For whyche the goddes of heuen aboue
Dey wroth/ & wrathe haue take for thy synne
Decreed for shame/ now we thy lyfe begynne
Pynos that was the mighty kyng of Crete
That had an hundred cytees strange & grete
To scholr hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athenes/ of the whyche it happed thus
That he was slayne/ lernyng phylosophye
Right in that cyte/ nat but for enuye
The great Pynos/ of the whyche I spelle
Hys sonnes dethe is come for to wreke
Wherfor he besyged harde and longe
But nathelesse the walles be so stronge
And Nisus/ that was kyng of that cyte
So chyualrous/ that lytel dredeth he
Of Pynos or his hoste/ tobe he no cure
Tyll on a day besyl an aduenture
That Nisus doughter stode vpon the wall
And of the siege sawe the manere all
So happed it/ that at scarmisshyng
She caste her herte vpon Pynos the kyng
For his beautie/ and his chiualrye
So sore/ that she wende for to dye
And shortly of this processe for to pace
She made Pynos wynnen thilke place
So that the cyte was al at his wyll
To sauen whom him lyste/ or elles spyll
But wikkedly he quyt her vnduesse
And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse
Lete that the goddes had of her pyte
But that tale were to longe as nowe for me
Athenes wan this kyng Pynos alsa
To Alcathoe/ and dyuers to anone
And thus the effect/ that Pynos made so many
Kny of Athenes/ that they mette his enuy
Fro yere to yere/ her owne children sende
For to be slayne/ as ye shal after here
Thus Pynos hath a monster/ a wicked beest
That was so cruel/ that without areest
Whan y a man was brought in to his presence
He wolde him take/ there helpeth no defence
And eaten hym/ bothen flesh and bones
They taken lotte/ as it cometh aboute
On ryche and poore/ he muste his sonne take
And of his hyde he muste present make
To Pynos/ to saue hem or to spylle
Dyuers his beest deuour hym at his wylle
And this hath Pynos don right in despyte
To wreke his sonne was set al his delyte
And make hem of Athenes his thrall
Fro yere to yere/ whyle he lyuen shall
And whom he fayleth whan this toun is won
This wicked custome is so longe ygonne
Tyll of Athenes kyng Egeus
Whyle sendeth his owne sonne Theseus
Hens that the lotte is fallen hym vpon
To ben deuoured/ for grace to there non
And forthe is ladde this wofull ionge knyght
Vnto the contree of kyng Pynos ful of myght
And in a prison fetered faste is he
Tyll the tyme he shulde yeuen be
Wel mayste thou wepe/ o wofull Theseus
That art a kynges sonne/ and vampres thus
Deuoured shalt/ that thou arte depe pholde
To whom that saued the fro cares colde
And nowe is any woman helpe the
Wel oughtest thou her seruaunt for to be
And ben her trewe louer yere by yere
But nowe to come ayen to my matere
The toure/ there this Theseus is thro we
Downe in the bottome deepe/ I wonder lowe
Was ropyng to the wall of a foreyne
Longyng vnto the doughter tweyne
Of Pynos/ that in her chambres grete
Dwellen aboue the mayne strete
Of the to wone/ in hope and in solas
Not I nat howe/ it happed pat cadas
As Theseus complayned him by nyght
The kynges doughter/ that Ariadne hight
And eke her suster Phedra/ herden all
His complaynte/ as they stode on the wall
And lowed vpon the bright moone
Hem lyste nat to go to bedde so soone
And of his wo they had compassyon
A kynges sonne to be in suche prison
And ben deuoured/ thought hem great pyte
Than Ariadne spake to her suster fre
And sayd: Phedra leue suster dere
This wofull lordes sonne may ye nat here
Howe pitously he complayneth his payne
And eke his poore estate that he is ynne?

Dessus And

And gyltlesse/certes no we it is routhe
And if ye wol assent by my trouthe
He shal ben holpen howe so that we do
Phedra answerde/ywis me is as wo
For him/ as euer I was for any man
And to his helpe the beste rede I can
Is/that we done the gayler prively
To come and speke with vs hastely
And don this wofull man with him to come
For if he may this monster ouercome
Than were he quyte/there is none other boote
Let vs wel taste him at his herte roote
That if so be/that he a weapen haue
Where that he is lyse dare kepe or saue
Fyghten with this sende/and him defende
For in the prison/ there as he shal discende
Ye wote wel/that the beest is in a place
That is nat derke/ & hath rome and ese space
To welde an ape/or swerde/ staffe/or knyfe
So that me thynketh he shulde saue his lyfe
If that he be a man/he shal do so
And we shal make him balles ese also
Of weye and towe/that whan he gapeth fast
In to the beestes throte he shal hem caste
To slake his honger/and encomber his tethe
And right anon/ whan that Theseus sethe
The beest achoked/he shal on him lepe
To sleen him/or they comen more to herpe
This weapen shal the gayler/or that tyde
Ful prively within the prison hyde
And for the house is crencled to and fro
And hath so queynt wayes for to go
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought
Therto haue I a remedye in my thought
That by a clewe of twyne/as he hath gone
The same way he may returne anon
Folowyng alway the threde/ as he hath come
And whan this beest is ouercome
Than may he flyen away out of this stede
And ese the gayler may he with him lede
And him auaunce at home in his countre
Sens that so great a lordes sonne is he
This is my rede/if that ye dare it take
What shulde I longer sermon of it make
The gayler cometh/and with him Theseus
Whan these thynges ben accorded thus
Downe sate Theseus vpon his knee
The right lady of my lyfe (quod he)
I sorouful man/ydampned to the dethe
Fro you/whyles that me lasteth breethe
I wol shal twynne/after this auenture
But in your seruyce/thus I wol endure
That as a wretch vnkno we/ I wol you serue
For euer more/tyl that myn herte sterue
Forsake I wol at home myn herytage
And as I sayd/ben of your courte a page
If that ye vouchsafe that in this place
ye graunt me to haue suche a grace
That I may haue/nat but my mete & drinke
And for my sustynaunce yet wol I swynke
Right as you lyste/that Wynos ne no wight
Sens that he saw me neuer with eyen sight
Ne no man els shal me espye
So slyly/and so wel I shal me gye
And me so wel disfygure/and so lowe (me
That in this world there shal no man me knowe
To haue my lyfe/and to haue presence
Of you/that done to me this excellence
And to my father shal I sende here
This worthy man/that is your gaylere
And him so guerdon/that he shal wel be
One of the greatest men of my countre
And if I durst I sayne/my lady bright
I am a kynges sonne/and ese a knyght
As wolde god/ if that it might be
ye weren in my countrey al this
And I with you/to beare you companye
Than shulde ye sene if that I therof lye
And if that I profer you in lowe manere
To ben your page/& seruen you right here
But I you serue as lowly in that place
I pray to Mars to yeue me suche grace
That shames dethe on me there mote fall
And dethe and pouerte to my frendes al
And that my spryte by night mote go
After my dethe/and wafte to and fro
That I mote of traytour haue a name
For which my spryte mote go/to do me shame
And if I clayme euer other degre
But ye vouchsafe to yeue it me
As I haue sayd/of shames dethe I dey
And mercy lady/I can naught els sey
A semely knyght was this Theseus to se
And yonge/but of twenty yere and thre
But who so had ysene his countenaunce
He wolde haue wept/ for routh of his penaunce

For

For whiche this Ariadne in this maneere
Answerde to his proffre and to his cheere
A kynges sonne/ & ellis a knyght (quod she)
To bey my seruaunt in so lowe degree
God shilde it/ for the shame of women al
And leue me neuer suche a case befal
And sende you grace/ and streght of hert also
You to defende/ & knyghtly to stryue your foe
And leue here after I maye you synde
To me/ and to my sustir hertis so kynde
That I me repent nat to reue you lyfe
Yet were it better I were your wyfe
Sithe ye bey as gentyl borne as I
And haue a realme nat but faste by
Than that I suffred your getylesse to sterue
Or that I sette you as a page sterue
It is no profyte/ as vnto your kynrede
But what is that/ ꝑ man wol nat do for drede
And to my sustir sith that it is so (de
That she mote gone with me/ if that I go
Or ells suffre dethe as wel as I
That ye vnto your sonne as trewly
Done her be wedded/ at your home comynge
This is the fynall ende of al thes thyng
Ye swere it here/ vpon al that may be swore?
Ye lady myn (quod he) or ells to torne
Hote I be/ with the mynotaure or to morowe
And haueth here of myn hert blode to borowe
If that ye wol/ if I had knyfe or speare
I wolde it letten out/ and therto sweare
For than at erste/ I wotte ye wolde me leue
Ey Mars/ that is cheefe of my beleue
So that I might lyuen/ and nat fayle
To morowe we for to fighten my batayle
I nolde neuer fro this place flye
Yf that ye shulde the very proffe se
For now we/ if that the sothe I shal you say
I haue loued you ful many a day
Though ye me wyst nat/ in my contrire
And aldermooste ordeyned you to be
Of any erthly lyuyng creature
Vpon my trouthe I sweare/ and you assure
This seuen yere I haue your seruaunt be
Now we haue I you/ and also haue ye me
Hy dere herte/ of Athenes duchesse
This lady smyleth at his fresh fynesse
And at his hertely wordes/ and at his cheere
And to her sustir sayd in this maneere
And sothly sustir myn (quod she)
Now we be we duchesses bothe I and ye
And syserde to the regals of Athenes
And bothe herafter lyuely to be quenes
And saued fro his dethe a kynges sonne
As euer of gentyl women is the wonne
To saue a gentyl man/ enforthe her might
In honest cause/ and namely in his right
We thinketh no wight ought vs herof blame
Ne dearth vs therfore an yuel name
And shortly of this mater for to make
This Theseus of her hath leaue ytake
And euery poynt was performed in dede
As ye haue in this couenaunt herde me rede
His wepen/ his clewe/ his thig ꝑ I haue sayde
Was by the gayler in the house playde
There as the Mynotaure hath his dwellyng
Right faste by the dore/ at his entryng
And Theseus is sadde vnto his dethe
And forthe vnto this Mynotaure he gethe
And by the teachyng of this Adriane
He ouertrame this beest/ and was his bane
And out he cometh by the clewe agayne
Ful prively/ whan he this beest hath slayne
And the gayler gotten hath a barge
And of his wynes treasure gan it charge
And tolde his wyfe/ and eke her sustir fre
And by the gayler/ and with hem al thre
Is stole away out of the londe by nyght
And to the countre of Enuppe hem dight
There as he had a frende of his knowyng
There feesten they/ there daunsen they & synge
And in his armes hath this Adriane
That of the beest hath kept him fro his bane
And get him there a noble barge anone
And of his countrey solde a ful great wone
And taketh his leaue/ & homwarde sayleth he
And by an yle/ amydde the wyde see
There as there dwelte creature none
Saue wylde beestes/ and that ful many one
He made his shyppe a londe for to sette
And in that yle/ halfe a day he lette
And sayd/ ꝑ on the londe he must him rest
His maryners haue done right as him lest
And for to tell shortly in this case
Whan Ariadne his wyfe a slepe was
For that her sustir sayer was than she
He taketh her in his honde/ and forth gothe he

To shyppe/and as a traytour stale away
Whyle that this Ariadne a slepe lay
And to his countrey warde he sayleth blyue
A twenty dyuel way/the wynde hym dryue
And sounde his father drenched in the see
The lyste no more to speke of hym parde
These false louers/poyson be her bane
But I wol turne agayne to Adriane
That is with slepe for werynesse ytake
Ful sorowfully her herte may awake
Alas/for the myn herte hath pyte
Right in the dawnyng awaketh she
And gropeth in the bed/& fonde right nought
Alas (qd she) that euer I was wrought
I am betraped/and her herte to rente
And to the stronde barefote fast she wente
And cryed: Theseus myn herte swete
Where be ye/ that I may nat with you mete?
And might thus with beestes ben yslayne
The holowe rockes answerde her agayne
No may she sawe/and yet shone the moone
And hye vpon a rocke she went soone
And sawe his barge/saylyng in the see
Lolde woxe her herte/and right thus sayd she
Wher than ye/ fynde I the beestes wylde
Hath he nat synne/that he her thus begylde
She cryed/o turne agayne for routh & synne
Thy barge hath nat al his meyne inne
Her kercheef on a pole styked she
Ascaunce he shulde it wele yse
And hym remembre that she was behynde
And turne agayne/& on the stronde her synde
But al for naught/ his way he is gone
And downe she sel a swowne on a stone
And vp she ryst/ and kyssed in al her care
The steppes of his fete/there he hath fare
And to her brodde right thus she speketh tho
Thou beddé (qd she) that hast receyued two
Thou shalt answere of two/and not of one
Where is the greater parte/ away gone
Alas/wher shal I wretched wight become?
For though so be that bote none here come
Home to my countrey dare I nat for drede
I can my selfe in this case nat rede
What shulde I tel more her complaynyng
It is so long? it were an heuy thyng
In her epystle/ Naso telleth all
But shortly to the ende tell I shal
The goddes hane her holpen for pyte
And in the signe of Taurus men may se
The stones of her crowne shyne clere
I wyl no more speke of this matere
But thus this false louer can begyle
His trewe loue/the dyuel quyt hym his wyle.

Here endeth the legende of Ariadne and here folowety the legende of Phylomene.

Thou peuer of the formes/ þ hast wrought
The fayre worlde/& bare it in thy thought
Eternally/er thou thy werke began
Why madest thou vnto the slaunder of man
Or al be that it was nat thy doyng
As for that fende/to make suche a thyng
Why suffredest thou that Tereus was borne?
That is my loue so false and so forsworne
That fro this worlde vp to the first heuen
Lorrumpeth/whā that folke his name nemen
And as to me/so grisly was his dede
That whan that I this foule storie rede
Myn eyen weyen foule/and sore also
Yet lasteth the venyme of so longe ago
That infecteth hym/ that wolde beholde
The storie of Tereus/of whiche I tolde
Of Trace was he lorde/and kyn to Marte
The cruel god that stante with blody darte
And wedded had he with blysful chere
Kyng Pandyons fayre doughter dere
That hight Progne/floure of her countre
Though Juno lyste nat at the ferst be
Ne Hymeneus/ that god of weddyng is
But at the ferst redy bey i wys
The furye thre/with al her mortal brande
The oule al nyght about the balkes wonde
That prophete is of wo/and of mischaunce
This cruel/ ful of songe and ful of daunce
Laste a fourtenyght/or lyttel lasse
But shortly of this storie for to passe
(For I am wery of hym for to tel)
Fyue yere his wyfe and he togyther dwel
Tyl on a day she gan so sore longe
To sene her suster that she sawe nat longe
That for desyre she wyst what to say
But to her husbonde gan she for to pray
For goddes loue/that she mote ones gone

Le

her suster for to seke/and come ayen anon
Or els but she mote to her wende
She praied him that he wolde after hir sende
And this was day by day al her prayere
With al humblesse of wyfehode/wonde re chere
This Tereus let make his shippes pare
And vp to Grece him selfe is forthe yfare
Vnto his father vp la we gan he pray
To bouche safe/that for a moneth or tway
That Philomene his wyues suster myght
On Progne his wyfe/but ones haue a syghe
And she shal come to pon agayne anon
Hy selfe with her/I wyl bothe come & gon
And as my hertes lyfe I wyl her kepe
This olde Pandion/this kyng gan wepe
For tendernesse of herte/for to leue
His doughter gon/and for to pene her seue
Of al this wolde he lowed nothyng so
But at the laste leaue hath she to go
For Philomene with salte terres eke
Gan of her father grace to beseke
To seue her suster/that her longeth so
And him embraceth/with her armes two
And there al so ponge and sayre was she
That whan that Tereus sawe her beaute
And of array/that there was none her lyche
And pet of beaute was she to so ryche
He caste his firy herte vpon her so
That he wol haue her/ho we so that it go
And with his wyles kneled/and so prayde
Tyl at the laste Pandion thus sayde
Nowe sonne (qꝺ he) that arte to me so dere
I the betake my ponge doughter dere
That kepeth the key of al myn hertes lyfe
And grete wel my doughter/and thy wyfe
And pene her leaue somtyme for to play
That she may sene me ones or I dey
And sothly he hath made him ryche ferst
And to his folke/the moste and eke the laste
That with him came/& pase him pestes greie
And him conueyeth through the maister strete
Of Athenes/and to the see him brought
And turneth home/no malyer he me thought
The ores pulleth forthe the vessel fast
And vp to Trace arryueth at the laste
And vp vp to a fourst he her ledde
And to a cane prively him spedde
And in this derke caue/if her lyste
Or lyste nought/he badde her for to reste
Of whiche her herte agrose/and sayd thus
Where is my suster/brother Tereus?
And there withal she wepte tenderly
And quoke for feare pale and pitously
Right as the lambe/that of the wolfe is bytten
Or as the culuer/that of the Egle is smytten
And is out of his clawes forth escaped
pet it is a ferde/and a waped
Lest it be hente estsones: so sate she
But vtterly it maye none other be
By force hath this traytour done a dede
That he hath reste her of her maydenhede
Maugre her heed/by strength & vp his might
Lo here a dede of men/and that a right
She cryeth suster with ful loude steuen
And father dere helpe me god in heuen
Al helpeth nat/and pet this false theue
Hath done this lady pet a more myschefe
For feare/lest she shulde his shame crye
And done him openly a vylanye
And with his swerde her tonge of kerfe he
And in a castel made her for to be
Ful prively in prison euermore
And kepte her to his vsage and to his store
So that she ne might neuer more astarte
O sely Philomene! wo is thyne hert
Huge ben thy sorowes/and wonder smert
God wreke the/and sende the thy bone
Nowe is tyme I make an ende soone
This Tereus is to his wyfe prome
And in his armes hath his wyfe ynome
And pitously he wepte/and shoke his heed
And swore her/that he founde her suster deed
For whiche this sely Progne hath suche wo
That nygh her sorouful herte brake a two
And thus in terres lette I Progne dwel
And of her suster forthe I wol you tel
This woful lady yclemed had in youth
So that she wolden and embraunden couth
And weauen in stole the radenore
And it of women hath be wonted pore
And sothly for to sayne/she hath her fyll
Of mete and drinke/of clothyng at her wyll
And couthe eke rede wel ynough and endyte
But with a penne she couldenat write
But letters can she weaue/to and fro
So that by the yere was al a go

The

She had wouen in a stamen large
How she was brought fro Athenes in a barge
And in a caue how that she was brought
And al the thyng that Tereus hath wrought
She wauc it wel/and wrote the flour aboue
How she was serued for her fusters loue
And to a man a ryngc she paue anon
And prayde hym by signes for to gon
Vnto the quene/and beareh her that clothe
And by signe swore many an othe
She shulde hym yeue what she getteh mygbt
This man anon vnto the quene hym dyght
And toke it her/and al the maner tolde
And whan ỳ Progne hath this thyng beholde
No worde she spake/for sorowe & eke for rage
But sayned her to gone on pilgrymage
To Bacchus temple/ and in a lytel stounde
Her dombe fuster syttyng hath she founde
Weppnge in the castel her selfe alone
Alas the wo/constraynte/and the mone
That Progne vpon her dombe fuster maketh
In armes euerych of hem other taketh
And thus I let hem in her sorowe dwell
The remenaunt is no charge to tell
For this is al and some/thus was she serued
That neuer agylte/ne deserued
Vnto this cruel man/that she of wyste
ye may beware of men if that you lyste
For al be that he wol nat for shame
Done as Tereus/to lese his name
Ne serue you as a murtherer or a knaue
Ful lytel whyle shul ye trewe hym haue
That wol I sayn/al were he now my brother
But it so be that he may haue a nother.

Here endeth the legende of Phylomene/ & here foloweth the legende of Phillis.

BY proue/as wel as by auctorite
That wicked frute cometh of a wicked tre
That may ye fynde/if that it lyketh you
But for this cause/I speke this as now
To tel you of false Demophon
Ihy loue a falser herde I neuer non
But it were his father Theseus
God for his grace fro suche one kepe vs
Thus these women prayen/that it here
How we to the effecte turne I of my matere
Distroyed is of Troye the cyte
This Demophon came sayling in the see
To warde Athenes/to his palays large
With hym came many a shyp/& many a barge
Ful of folke/of whiche ful many one
Is wounded sore/and sicke/and wo begone
And they haue at the siege longe playne
Behynde hym came a wynde/and eke a rayne
That shofe so sore/his sayle might nat stonde
Hym were leuer than al the worlde alonde
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro
So derke it was/he couthe nowhere go
And with a wawe brusteh was his stere
His shyp was rente so lowe/in suche maner
That carpenter couthe it nat amende
The see by nyght as any torche biende
For woode/and posseth hym vp and downe
Ful Neptune hath of hym compassyoun
And Thetis Chorus/ Tryton/ and they al
And maden hym vp a londe to fall
Whereof that Phillis lady was and quene
Lycurgus doughter/ fayrer vnto sene
Than is the flour agayne the brygbt sonne
Vnneth is Demophon to londe ỳ wonne
Weake and eke wery/and his folke sorpryed
Of werynesse/ and also enfampned
And to the dethe he was almoste pdoncd
His wyse folke counsayle haue hym yeuen
To seken helpe and socourc of the quene
And soken what his grace might beue
And maken in that lande some chcuesaunce
And kepen hym fro wo/and fro mischaunce
For sicke he was/and almoste at the dethe
Vnneth might he speke/or draw breth
And sythe in Rodopeya hym for to rcste
Whā he may walke/him thought it was beste
Vnto the countre to seken for socour
Whyle that we hym wele/and dyd hym honour
For at Athenes duke and lorde was he
As Theseus his father hath ybe
That in his tyme was great of renoun
No man so great in al his regioun
And lyke his father of face and of stature
And false of loue/it came hym of nature
As dothe the sope Renarde/the sayen sonne
Of kynde he couthe his olde fathers wonne
Without lore/as can a drake swymme

Thus

Whan it is caught/ and carped to the hymme
This honorable quene Phillis doth hym chere
Her lyketh wel his speche and his manere
But I am agroted here before me
To write of hem that my love ben forswore
And eke to haste me in my legende
Whiche to performe/god me grace sende
Therfore I passe shortly in this wyse
Ye haue wel herde of Theseus the gyse
In the betrapeng of fayre Adriane
That of her pyte kepte hym fro his bane
And shorte wordes/right so Demophon
The same way/is the same pathe hath gone
That dyd his false father Theseus
For vnto Phillis hath he swore thus
To wedden her/and her his trouthe plyght
And pfred of her al the good he myght
Whan he was hole & sounde/and had his reste
And dothe with Phillis/what so p hym leste
Ne wel I coulde/if that me lyste so
Telling al his doyng to and fro
He sayd to his countrey moste hym sayle
For there he wolde her wedding apparayle
As fyl to her honour/and his also
And openly he toke his leaue tho
And to her swore he wolde nat sojourne
But in a mouth agayne he wolde retourne
And in that londe lete make his ordynaunce
As very lorde/and toke the obeysaunce
Wel and hombly/and his shyppes dyght
And home he gothe the next way he myght
For vnto Phillis yet came he nought
And that hath she so harde and sore pbought
Alas/as the stone dothe he rerorde
She was her owne dethe with a corde
Whan she sawe that Demophon her traped
But furst wrote she to him/a paste him prayed
He wolde come/and delyuer her of payne
As I reherse shal a while or tweyne
He lyste nat vouchsafe on him to sweuche
Dispenden on him a penne ful of ynke
For false in loue was he/right as his syre
The dyuel sette her soules bothe on a fyre
But of the letters of Phyllen wol I write
A worde or tweyne/al though it be but lyte
Alyn hoselesse (quod she) O Demophon
Thy Phillis/whiche that is so wo begon
Of Rhodopeye/vpon you wate complayne
Duel the terme sette betwyxt be twayne
That ye ne holden forwarde/as ye sayde
Your auere/ whiche ye in our hauen layde
Nyght be/that ye wolde comen out of doute
Or that the moone ones went aboute
But tymes four/the moone hath hyd her fare
Sens thylke day ye wente fro this place
And four tymes lyght the worlde agayne
But for al that/yet shal I sothly sayne
yet hath the fortune of Scython nat brought
From Athenes the shyp/yet came it nought
And if that ye the terme reken wolde
As for other trewe louers do sholde
I playne nat (god wot) before my day
But al her letter within I se may
By order/for it were to me a charge
Her letter was right longe/and therto large
But here and there/in ryme I haue it layde
There as me thought that she hath wel sayde
She sayd/the sayles cometh nat agayne
Ne to the worde/there nys no fey certayne
But I wot why ye come nat (quod she)
For I was of my loue to you so fre
And of the goddes that ye haue swore
That her vengeaunce fal on you therfore
Ye be nat suffysaunt to beare the payne
To mothe trusted I/ wel may I sayne
Vpon your lynage/and your fayre tonge
And on your teeres/ false vntrue wronge
How coude ye wepe so or craste ? (quod she)
Wayle there suche teeres sayned be ?
Lowe certes/ if ye wolde haue in mynde
It ought be to you but lytel glorie
To haue a sely mayde thus betrayde
To god (qd she) pray I/and ofte haue prayde
That it be nowe the greatest pure of all
And most honour/that euer you shal befall
And whan thyn olde auncetres paynted be
In whiche men may her worthynesse se
I day pray I god/thou paynted be also
That folke may reden/ southe by as they go
Lo this is he/that with his flatterye
Betrayed hath/and done her vilanye
That was his trewe loue/in thought & dede
But sothly of a poynt yet may they rede
That ye ben lyke your father/as in thys
For he begyled Ariadne y wis
With suche an arte/and suche subtelte

As thou thy selfen haste begyled me
As my that poynt/al though it be nat seyne
Thou solowest certayne/and arte his heyre
But sens thus synfully ye me begyle
Thy body mote ye sene/within a whyle
Right in the hauen of Athenes sleyng
Withouten sepulture and burying
Though ye ben harder than is any stone
And whan this letter was forthe sent anone
And knewe how he was false he was
She for dispayre forsyd her selfe/alas
Suche sorowe hath she/for she beset her so
Beware ye women of your subtylle foe
Sens yet this day/ men may ensample se
And trusteth nowe in loue no man but me.

Here endeth the legende of Phillis/ and here folowen the legende of Hypermestre.

In Grece whylom weren bretherne two
Of whiche that one was called Danao
That many a sonne hath of his body wonne
As suche false louers ofte conne
Amonge his sonnes al there was one
That aldermoste he loued of euerychone
And whan this childe was borne/this Danao
Shope him a name/and called him Lyno
That other brother called was Egyste
That was of loue as false as euer him lyste
And many a doughter gate he in his lyfe
Of whiche he gate vpon his right wyfe
A doughter dere/and dyd her for to call
Hypermestra/ yongest of hem all
The whiche childe of her natyuite
To al good thewes borne was she
As lyked to the goddes or she was borne
That of the sheef she shulde be the corne
The werdes that we clepen destyne
Hath shapen her/that she muste nedes be
Pytous/sadde/wyse/trewe as stele
And to this woman it accordeth wele
For though that Venus paue her grete beaute
With Jupiter compowned so was she
That conscience/trouthe/and drede of shame
And of her wyfehode for to kepe her name
This thought her was felyest as here
And redy Mars/ was that tyme of the yere
So feble/ that his malyce is him taste
Repressed hath Venus his cruell craste
And what with Venus/and other oppressyon
Of houses/Mars his benym is a don
That Hypermestre dare nat handle a knyfe
In maner/ though she shulde lese her lyfe
But natheless/as heuen gan the turne
Two badde aspectes/ hath she of Saturne
That made her to dye in prison
And I shal after make mencion
Of Danao and Egystes also
And though so be that they were brethern two
For thilke tyme nas spared no lynage
It lyked hem to maken mariage
Betwyxt Hypermestre/ and him Lyno
And eastren suche a day it shal be so
And sul acorded was it vtterly
The array is wrought/the tyme is fest by
And thus Lyno hath of his fathers brother
The doughter wedded/ech of hem hath other
The torches brennen/ the lampes bright
The sacrifyce hen ful redy dight
Thensence out of the fyre resith soote
The flour the lefe/is rent vp by the roote
To maken garlandes and crownes hye
Ful is the place of sounde of mynstralcye
Of songes amorous of mariage
As thilke tyme was the playne vsage
And this was in the paleys of Egyste
That i his house was sorer/right as him lyste
And thus that day they dauncen to an ende
The frendes taken leue/and home they wende
The night is comen/the bride shal go to bedde
Egyste to his chambre fast him spedde
And priuely let his doughter call
Whan that the house voyded was of hem all
He loketh on his doughter with gladde chere
And to her spake/as ye shal after here
Thy right doughter/ teeforn of myn herte
Sens first that day/ þ shapen was my sherte
Or by the fatall fuster had my deme
Do nye myn herte neuer thyng me come
As thou Hypermestre/doughter dere
Take hede what thy father saythe the here
And werke after thy wyser euer mo
For aldest first doughter/ I shut the so
That al the worlde to me ne shal be lefe
Ne nolde rede the to thy mischefe

Jou

For al the good vnder the colde moone
And what I mene/ it shal be sayd right soone
With protestacion/as sayne these wyse
That but thou do/as I shal the deuyse
Thou shalt be deed/by him ȳ al hath wrouȝt
At shorte wordes thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleys/or that thou be deed
But thou consent/and werke after my reed
Take this to the fearful conclusyoun
This Hypermustre casteth her eyen doun
And quoke as dothe the leefe of asshe grene
Perd wept her herte/ & syke as a sshen to sene
And sayd: lorde and father al your wyll
After my might/god wote I shal fulfyll
So it be to me no confusyon
I wyl (quod he) haue none exception
And out he caught a knyfe/as rasour kene
Hyde this (qd he) that it be nat yseene
And whan thyn husbonde is to bedde go
Whyle that he slepeth/cutte his throte a two
For in my dremes it is warned me
How that my neuewe shal my bane be
But whiche I not/wherfore I wol be syker
If thou say nay/we two shal haue a byker
As I haue sayde/ by him that I haue swore
This Hypermustre hath nigh her wyt forlore
And for to passen harmelesse out of that place
She granted him/ ther was none other grace
And withal a coffred taketh he tho
And sayd/ herof a draught or two
Yeue him drunke/ whan he gothe to reste
As he shal slepe as longe as euer the leste
The narcotikes and opies ben so stronge
And go thy way/leste that him thynke to longe
Out cometh the bride/ & with ful sobre chere
As is of maydens ofte the maniere
To chambre brought/with reuel & with songe
And shortly/leste this tale be to longe
This Lino and she bothe brought to bedde
And euery wight out at the doore him spedde
The night is wasted/and he fel a slepe
Ful tenderly begynneth she to wepe
She rysth her vp/and dredefully she quaketh
As dothe the braunche/that zephirus shaketh
And shyfte were al my Argone that eyte
As colde as any froste now we weyeth she
For pyte by the herte strayned her so
And drede of dethe dothe her so mothe wo
That thise downe she fyl/in suche a were
She ryste her vp/and staereth here & there
And on her handes faste lokketh she
Alas/shal myn handes bloody be
I am a mayde/and as by my nature
And by my semblaunt/and by my vesture
Myn hondes ben nat shapen for a knyfe
As for to reue no man fro his lyfe
What dyuel haue I with the knyfe to do?
And shal I haue my throte corue a two?
Than shal I blede alas/and be shende
And nedes this thing mote haue an ende
Or he or I mote nedes lese our lyfe
Nowe certes (quod she) sens I am his wyfe
And hath my faythe/yet is it bette for me
For to be deed/in wifely honestie
Than be a traytour/lyuyng in my shame
Do as be may/for ernest or for game
He shal awake/and ryse and go his way
Out at this gutter/er that it be day
And wept ful tenderly vpon his face
And in her armes gan him to embrace
And him she roggeth/and awaketh softe
And at the wyndowe lepe he fro the lofte
Whan she hath warned him/ & don him boote
This Lyno swyfte was/and light of foote
And from her ran/a ful good paas
This sely woman is so weake/ alas
And helpeleste/so that er she ferre wente
Her cruel father dyd her for to hente
Alas Lyno) why arte thou so vnkynde
Why ne haste thou remembred in thy mynde
And taken her/ & ledde her forthe with the
For whan she sawe that goon away was he
And that she might not so faste go
Ne folowen him/she sate downe right tho
And tyl she was caught/ & fettred in prison
This tale is sayd for this conclusyon.

¶ Thus endeth the legendes of good women/ and here folowethe a balade of Chaucer.

¶ A goodly balade of Chaucer.

Mother of norture/ best beloued of al
And fresshest flour/ to whom good thrist god
Your childe/ if it lust you me so to cal (sede
All be I vnable my selfe so to pretende
To your discrecion I recomende
Myn herte and al/ with euery circumstaunce
Al holy to be vnder your gouernaunce

Moste desyre I/ and haue/ and euer shal
Thyng/ whiche might your hertes ease amende
Haue me excused/ my power is but small
Nathelesse of right ye ought to cõmende
My good wyll/ whiche fayne wolde entende
To do you seruyce/ for al my suffysaunce
Is holy to be vnder your gouernaunce

Meekly vn: in herte/ whiche neuer shal apal
Ay fresshe & newe/ & right glad to dispende
My tyme in your seruyce/ what so befall
Beseechyng your excellence to defende
My simpleuesse/ if ignoraunce offende
In any wyse/ sythe that myn affyaunce
Is holy to ben vnder your gouernaunce

Daisy of lyght/ very grounde of comforte
The Sonnes doughter (ye right) as I rede
For whan he westreth/ farwel your disporte
By your nature anon right for pure drede
Of ỳ rude night/ that with his boysterous wede
Of derkeuesse/ shadoweth our emysperie
Than closen ye/ my lyues lady dere

Dawyng the day/ to his vnde resorte
And Phebus po[1] father/ with his firemes rede
Adorneth the morowe/ consumyng the sorte
Of misty cloudes/ that wolden ouerlede
Tre we humble hertes/ with her mistyhede
Nere comforte a dayes/ whan eyen clere
Disclose and sprede my lyues lady dere

Je vouldraye but great god disposeth
And maketh casuel by his prouydence
Suche thyng/ as mans freele witte purposeth
Al for the best/ if that our conscience
Nat grutche it/ but in humble patience
It recepue/ for god sayethe without fable
A sayethful herte euer is acceptable

Lauteles/ who so vseth gladly gloseth
To eschewe suche it is right high prudence
What ye sayd ones/ myn herte opposeth
That my wrytyng iapes in your absence
Pleased you moche better than my presence
yet can I more/ ye be nat excusable
A sayethful herte euer is acceptable

Quaketh my penne/ my spyrit supposeth
That in my wrytyng ye fynde wol some offence
Myn hert welneueth thus sone/ anon it ryseth
Now hotte/ now colde/ and este in feruence
That myssse is/ is caused of negligence
And not of malyce/ therfore bethe tractable
A sayethful herte euer is acceptable.

¶ Lenuoye.

¶ For the cõplaynt/ for the lackyng eloquence
For the lytel lettre of endytyng lame
I haue besought my ladyes sapience
Of thy behalfe/ to accept in game
Thyn mabylite/ do thou the same
Abyde/ haue more yet: Je serue Jouesse
Now forth/ I close the in holy Venus name
The shal vnclose my hertes gouernaresse.

¶ Finis.

¶ Thus endeth this balade: And here folowethe the boke of Boecius de cõsolatione philosophie.

Boetius de consolatione philosophie.

Carmina qui quondam ſtudio florente peg.
Flebilis heu meſtos cogor inire modos.

ALas/ I wepyng am conſtrayned
to begyn vers of ſorouful mater/
that whilom my flouriſſhyng ſtu-
dye made delytable dytees.
For lo/ rendyng muſes of poetes/
endyten to me thynges to be writtyn/ a dier-
tiers. At laſt no deedyne might ouertrome tho
muſes/ that they ne weren frendes and folowers
my way/ that is to ſay: whan I was eryled/
they ꝑ weren of my youthe whylom wele-ful
and grene/ comforten nowe ſorouful werdes
of me olde man: for elde is comen vnwarely
vpon me/ haſted by the harmes that I haue/
and ſo nowe hath comaunded his age to be in
me. Heeres hore arne ſhadde ouertrynely the
vpon my heed: and the ſlacke ſkynne trem-
bleth of myn empted body. Thilke dethe of
men is welefull/ ꝑ ne cometh nat in peres that
be ſwete/ but cometh to wretches often ycleped.
Alas/ alas/ with how wele deefe an eere dethe cruel
turneth away fro wretches/ and nayeth for to
cloſe wepyng eyen. While fortune vnfayth-ful
fauoured me with lyght goodes/ the ſorouful
houre/ that is to ſaye/ the dethe/ had almoſte
derput myn heed: But nowe for fortune clou-
by hath chaunged her decepuable chere to me-
ward/ myne vnpytous lyfe drayeth a longe
vnagreable dwelliges. O ye my frendes/ what
or whereto enaunted ye me to ben welefull? for
he that hath fallen/ ſtode in no ſtedfaſt degre.

Her dum mecū tacitus ipſe reputarem/
carmentiq; lachrimabilem ſtilū officio
deſignarem: aſtitiſſe mihi ſuprā uerticem
viſa eſt mulier reuerēdi admodū vultus/
oculis ardentibus/ et vltrā cōmunem. ꝛc.

IN the meane whyle that I ſtyl recorded
theſe thynges with my ſelfe/ and mar-
ked my wepely cōplaynt with offyce of popu-
lil: I ſaugh ſtondynge abouen the hyght of
myne heed/ a woman of ful great reuerence
by ſemblaunt/ her eyen brennyng/ and clere
ſeyng ouer the cōmen myght of men/ with a
lyuely colour/ ꝑ with ſuche vigour and ſtrēgth/
that it ne might nat ben ēpned/ al were it ſo
that ſhe were ful of ſo great age/ that men ne
wolden nat trowen in no maner that ſhe were
of our elde. The ſtature of her was of dou-
tous iugement/ for ſomtyme ſhe conſtrayned
and ſhrouke her ſeluen lyke to the cōmen me-
ſure of men: And ſomtyme it ſemed that ſhe
touched the heuen with the heyght of her heed.
And whan ſhe houe her heed hyer/ ſhe perced
the ſelfe heuen/ ſo that the ſyght of men lokyng
was in vdel: her clothes were maked of right
delye thredes and ſubtyl craft of perdurable
matiere. The whiche clothes ſhe had wouen
with her owne handes/ as I knewe wel after
by her ſelfe declaryng/ and ſhewyng to me the
beaute: the which clothes a derkneſſe of a for-
leten and diſpyſed elde had duſked and derked/
as it is wonte to derke by ſmoked ymages. In
the nethereſt hēne or bordure of theſe clothes/
men redde ywouen therin a grekyſſhe A. that
ſignifieth the lyfe Actyue/ and aboue that let-
ter in the hyeſt bordoure a grekyſſhe T. that
ſignifyeth the lyfe Contemplatyfe. And by-
twene theſe two letters there were ſene degrees
nobly wrought in maner of ſaddres/ by which
degrees men might clymben from the nethe-
reſt lettre to the vppereſt: Nathelеſſe handes
of ſome men hadden berue that clothe by vio-
lence or by ſtrength/ and euerych man of hem
had borne away ſuch peces as he might geten.
And forſoth this forſayd woman bare ſmale
bookes in her right hande/ and in her lyfte hande
ſhe bare a ſceptre. And whan ſhe ſawe theſe
poetycal muſes approchyng aboute my bed/
and endityng wordes to my wepynges/ ſhe
was a lytel amoued/ and glowed with cruel
eyen. Who (quod ſhe) hath ſuffred approchen
to this ſicke man theſe comen ſtrompettes/ of
whiche is the place/ that men callen Theatre/
the whiche onely ne aſwagen nat his ſorowes
with remedies/ but they wolde feden and nou-
riſſhe him with ſwete venym: Forſothe that
ben tho that with thornes and prickynges of
talētes of affections/ whiche that ben nothing
fruytuous nor profytable/ diſtroyen the come
plentuous of fruites of reaſon. For they hol-
den hertes of men in vſage/ but they ne delyu-
er no ſoule fro maladye. But if the muſes

had withdrawen fro me with your flatteryes any ay vnconnynge and vnprofytable mayſ as ben wonte to fynde comenly amonge the people/ I wold wel ſuffre the laſſe greuouſſly. For why/in ſuch an vnprofytable man/ myn ententes were nothyng endamaged. But ye withdrawen fro me this man/ that hath ben nourryſſhed in my ſtudyes or ſcholes of Eſcatens and of Achademens in Greee. But goth nowe rather awaye ye inermaydens/ whiche that ben ſwete tyl it be at the laſte/ & ſuffreth this man to be cured and heled by my muſes/ that is to ſaye/ by my noteful ſcyences. And thus this companye of muſes ylamed/ caſten wrothly the chere downwarde to the erthe/ and ſhewing by reedneſſe her ſhame/ they paſſeden ſorouſfully the threſſholde. And I of whome the ſyght plounged in teeres was derked/ ſo that I ne might nat knowe/ what that woman was of ſo imperfak auctoute/ I woxe al abaſſhed and ſtonyed/ and caſt my ſight downe to the erthe/ and began ſtyll for to abyde what ſhe wolde done afterwarde. Thay came ſhe nere/ & ſet her downe vpon the vtterſt corner of my bedde/ and ſhe beholdyng my chere that was caſte to the erthe/ heauy and greuous of wepyng/ cõplayned with theſe wordes (that I ſhal ſayne) the ꝑturbacion of my thought.

Heu q̃ ꝓcipiti merſa ꝓfundo Mens hebet/ et ꝓpꝛia luce relicta Tendit ad externas ire tenebꝛas: Terrenis quoties fluctibus acta Creſcit in immenſum noꝛia cura. Hic quondã celo liber aperto. ꝛc.

ALas/ howe the thought of this man dreynt in ouerthrowyng depneſſe/ dulleth and forletteth his propꝛe clerneſſe/ mynſtyng to gone in to forayne derkneſſe/ as ofte as his anoyous buſyneſs wepeth without meſure/ that is driuen with worldely wynder. This man that whylom was free/ to whome the heuen was open and knowen/ and was wonte to gone in heuenly pathes/ and ſawe the ſyghtneſſe of the reed ſonne/ and beheelde the ſterres of the colde moone/ & whiche ſterre in heuen vſeth wandringe recourſes pſlytte by dyuers ſpheres. This man ouercomer had comprehended al this thynge by nombre of acomptyng in aſtronomye. And ouer this ſe was wont to ſeken the cauſes/ whens the ſowrynge wyndes mouen/ and beſpen the ſmeeke water of the ſee. And what ſpyrit tourneth the ſtable heuen. And why the ſterre riſeth out of the reed eſte/ to ſallen in ỹ weſtren waues. And what attempreth the luſty houres of the firſt ſomer ſeaſon/ and hyghteth and apparayleth the erthe with roſy floures. And who maketh the plentuous Autumpne in ful yeres ſteken with hevy grapes. And eke this man was wonte to ſeken the dyuers cauſes of nature that were hydde. Alſo howe lightlyes empted the ſyght of his thought/ and his neeke is preſſed with hevy chaynes/ and beareth his chere enclyned adowne for the great weight/ and is cõſtrayned to lokey on the foule erthe.

Sed magis medicine (inquit) tempus eſt q̃ querele. Boe. Tum vero totus in me intenta luminibus. Phylo. Tu ne ille es (aut) qui noſtro quondam lacte nutritus/ noſtris eductatus alimentis/ in virilis animi robur eualeras. ꝛc.

BOt tyme is nowe of medycine (q̃ ſhe) more than complaynte: Forſothe than ſhe entendyng to me warde with al the loking of her eyen ſayde. Arte not thou he (q̃ ſhe) that whylom I nourryſſhed with my myſtes/ and ſoſtred with my metes/ were eſcaped and comen to the corage of a parfayte man? Certes I paue the ſuche armures/ that if thou thy ſelfe ne haddeſt firſt caſt hem away/ they ſholden haue defended the in ſykernesſe/ that may not be ouercomen. Knowſt thou not me? Why arte thou ſtylle? is it for ſhame or for aſtonyeng: It were me leuer it were for ſhame/ but it ſemeth me that aſtonyeng hath oppreſſed the. And whan ſhe ſawe me not onely ſtyll/ but rather without office of tong/ al domb/ ſhe layde her hande ſoftely vpon my breſt/ and ſayde: Here is no peryll (quod ſhe) he is fallen in to a lytarge/ whych that is a comune ſickneſſe to herte that ben diſeryued. He hath a lytel forgeten him ſelfe. But certes he ſhall

lyghtly

ſyghtly remembryng hym ſelfe/ if ſo be that he hath knowen me or no we. And that he maye doone ſo/ I wyll wype his eyen a lytell that be derked by the cloude of mortal thynges. Theſe wordes ſayd ſhe/ and with the lappe of her gar ment ypplted in a ſtouice ſhe dryed myn eyen that weren ful of ȳ wawes of my weppynges.

Tunc me diſcuſſa liquerunt nocte tenebre/ Luminibuſq; prior redit vigor. Vt cum precipiti glomerantur ſidera choro/ Symboliſq; polus ſtetit imbribus/ Sol latet/ac non dū celo venientibus aſtris ꝛc.

Thus whan that nyght was diſcuſſed awaye/ derkeneſſe forlete me/ and to myn eyen repayred agayne her firſte ſtrength. And right as by enſample/ as the ſonne is hydde whan the ſterres ben couerde with cloudes/ by a ſwyfte wynde that hyght Thous/ and the firmament ſtaunte derked by wete plungy cloudes. And that the ſterres not aperen vpon the heuen/ ſo that the nyght ſeemeth ſpraad vpon the erthe. If than the wynde that hyght Boreas/ yſent out of ȳ caue of the countrey of Trace/ beateth this nyght/ that is to ſayne/ chaſeth it awaye/ and diſcouereth the cloſed day. Than ſhyneth Phebus yſhaly with ſodayne lyght/ and ſmyteth with his beames in marueylyng eyen.

Haud aliter triſticie nebulis diſſolutis/ hauſi celum/ et ad cognoſcendam medicantis faciem/ mentem recepi. Itaq; vbi in cā deduri oculos/ intuitiq; deturi/ reſpicio nutricem meam/ lumen ab adoleſcentia ꝛc.

Right ſo and none other wyſe/ the cloudes of ſorowe diſſolued y done awaye/ I toke heuen and receyued myndе to knowen the face of my phiſyciey: ſo that I ſette myne eyen vpon her and faſtned my lokyng. I beholde my nource Philoſophie in whoſe houſe I had conuerſed fro my youthe/ and I ſayde thus. O thou mayſtreſſe of al vertues deſcended from the ſouerayne ſete/ why art thou comen in to this ſolitary place of myn exile? Arte thou comen for thou arte made coulpable with me of falſe blames. O (quod ſhe) my nource/ ſhulde I forſake the nowe/ ſhulde I not parten with the by comen trauayle the charge that thou haſte ſuffred for cauſe of my name? Certes it were not leful ne fyttyng to Philoſophie to letten without compayne the way of hym that is innocent: Shulde I than redoute my blame/ and agriſe as though there were befallen a newe thing? For troweſt thou that Philoſophie be nowe alder firſt aſſayled in perils by folke of wicked maner? Haue I not ſtryuen with ful great ſtryfe in olde tyme before the age of my Plato/ againſt the foolehardyneſſe of folye? And eke the ſame Plato fyuyng/ his mayſter Socrates deſerued victorye of vnrightful dethe in my preſence. The herytage of the whiche Socrates/ the heritage is to ſayne the doctryne/ of the whiche Socrates in his opinyon of ſelyrate/ that I cleape weleſulneſſe: whan that the people of Epicuriens and Stoiciens/ and many other enforced them to go rauyſſhe/ euery man for his parte/ that is to ſayne: that euerych of hem wolde drawen to the defence of his opinyon the wordes of Socrates. They as in partye of their praye to drowen me cryeng and debatynge therayenſt/ and corouen and renten my clothes that I had wouen with myne owne handes. And with tho clothes that they had araced out of my clothes they wenten awaye/ weninge that I had gone with hem euery deſe. In whiche Epicuriens and Stoiciens for as moche as there ſemed ſome traces and ſteppes of my habyte/ The ſoye of weuyng tho Epicuriens and Stoiciens my ſamplers/ peruerted ſome through the errour of the wyſed multytude of hem: This is to ſayne/ for they ſemed philoſophers/ they weren purſued to the dethe and ſlayne. So if thou haſte not knowen the exilynge of Anaxagoras/ ne the enpoyſonyng of Socrates/ ne the turmentes of Zeno/ for they weren ſtraungers/ yet myghteſt thou haue knowen the Senecas/ the Lanios/ and the Soranos: Of whiche ſolke the renōme is neyther ouer olde ne vnſolempne. The whiche men no thynge elſe ne brought to

the dethe/ but onely for they were enformed of my maners/and semeden moste vnlyke to the studyes of wicked folke. And for thy thou oughtest not to wondren/though that I in the bytter see be dreuen with tempestes blowynge aboute. In the whiche this is my moste purpose/ that is to sayne to displesen wicked men. Of whiche shrewes al be the hooste neuer so great/ it is to dispyse/ for it is not gouerned with no leader of reason/ but it is rauysshed onely by fletynge errour/ folily and sightly. And if they somtyme make an hooste ayenst vs/assayle vs as strenger: our leder draweth togyther his rychesses in to his tour/ and they ben ententyse aboute sarpleris or sachelles vnprofytable for to taken. But we that ben hygh abouen/ syker from al tumulte a woode noyse/ warnestored and enclosed in suche a paleys/ whither as that clateryng or anoyeng folys may not attayne/ we scorne suche raueners and henters of foulest thynges.

Quisquis compolito serenus euo Fatum sub pedibus egit superbum: Fortunamq; tuens vtramq; rectus Inuictum potuit tenere vultum. &c.

WHo so it be that clere of vertue/ sad/ and wel ordynate of lyuynge/ that hath put vnderfoote the proude werdes/ and loseth vpright vpon eyther fortune/ he maye holden his chere vndiscomfyted. The rages ne the manaces of the see comouynge and chasynge vnware heate from the bottome/ ne shal nat moue ỳ man/ ne the vnstable mountayne that hyght Vesevus/ that writheth out through his brokey thy meneyes smokyng fyres/ ne the way of thonder leyte/ that is wonte to smyten hygh toures ne shal nat moue that man. Wherto than wretches drede ye tyraunres/ that ben woode and felonnous with any strength? Hope after nothynge/ ne drede thou not: and so shalte thou disarmey the ire of thilke vnmyghty tyraunte. But who that quakynge dredeth or despyeth thyng that is not stable of his right/ that may that so dothe hath caste away his shylde/ and is remoued fro the place/ and enlaseth hym in the chayne/ with the whiche he may be drawen.

Sentis ne (inquit) hec? atq; animo illabuntur tuo? Expers ne es lyre? Quid fles? Quid lachrymis manas? Si opera medicantis expectas/ oportet vt vultus detegas tuum. &c.

HElyst thou (quod she) these thynges: and entren they aught in thy corage: Art thou lyke an asse to the harpe? Why wepest thou? Why spyliest thou teres: If thou abydest after helpe of thy leche/ the behoueth discouer thy wounde. Tho I had gathered strength in my corage and answerd and said. A nedeth it (qd I) of rehersyng or of amouicion/ a sheweth it not ynough by hym selfe the sharpnesse that wepeth woode ayenst me. Ne moueth it not the to se the face or the maner of this place: Is this the librarye that thou haddest chosen for a right certayne syege to the in myn house/ there as thou disputest oft with me of the science of thinges touching dyuinite and touchyng mankynde? Was than myn habite suche as it is now: Was my face or chere such as is now/ whan I sought with the secretes of nature/ whan thou enformedest my maners and the reason of al my lyfe/ to thensample of the ordre of heuen: Is not this the guerdon that I reserre to the/ to whome I haue be obeysaunt: Certes thou enformedest by the mouthe of Plato this sentence/ that is to sayne: that comen thynges or comynalties weren blissful/ if they that had studyed al fully to wisdom gouernedyn thylke thynges: or elles if it so befel that the gouernours of comynalties studiden to get wisedome. Thou saydest ebe by the mouthe of the sayde Plato/ that it was a necessary cause/ wise men to taken and despyen the gouernaunce of comen thynges/ for that the gouernementes of cytes plesten in the handes of felonous tourmenteurs: cytezeins ne shulden not bringen in pestilence and destruction

distruction to good folke. And therfore I fo-
lowyng thilke auctours desyred to put forthe
in execucion and in acte of comen administra-
cion thylke thynges/ that I had lerned of the
auncyent my secrete restyng whiles/ thou and
god that put in the thoughtes of wyse folke/
beyng knowyng with me/ ỹ nothing ne brought
me to maistrye or dignyte but the comen stu-
dye of al goodnesse. And therfore cometh it
that bytwene wicked folke and me haue ben
greuous discordes/ that ne mighten not be re-
leased by prayers: for this lyberte hath the fre-
dome of conscience/ that the wrathe of more
mighty folke hath alway ben dispysed of me
for sauacion of right. Howe ofte haue I re-
systed and withstande that many that hyght
Langast/ that made alway thassaute ayenst
the prosper fortunes of poore feble folke:
Howe ofte eke haue I put of or caste out hym
Trigyl prouost of the kynges house/ bothe
of the wronges that he had begonne to done/
and eke fully performed: Howe often haue
I couered and defended by the auctoute of me
put ayenst perylo/ that is to sayne: put myn
auctoute in peryl for the wretched poore folke
that the couetyse of straungers vnpunysshed
tormenteden alwaye with miseases and gre-
uances out of nombre: Neuer man yet drowe
me fro right to wronge. Whan I sawe the
fortunes and the rychesses of the people of the
prouynces ben harmed and amenused/ eyther
by pray raynes or by comen tributes or ca-
rages/ as sory was I as they that suffreden
the harme. Glose. Whan that Theodouke
kynge of Gothes in a deed yere had his gar-
ners ful of corne/ and commaunded that no
man shulde bye no corne tyll his corne were
solde/ and at a greuous dere price: Boece with
stode that ordynaunce/ and ouerraine it/ know-
yng al this the kyng Theodouke him selfe.
Coempcion is to saye comen achate or byeng
togyther/ that were establysshed vpon the peo-
ple by suche a maner impositon/ as who so
bought a bussshel of corne/ he must peuen the
kynge the fyfthe parte. Textus. Whan it
was in the sore hongry tyme/ there was esta-
blysshed greuous and vnprofytable coemp-
cion/ that men sene wel it shulde greatly tur-
mentey and endomagey al the prouynce of
Campayne. I tobe stryfe ayenst the Pre-
uost of the pretoire for the comen profyte. And
the knowyng of it/ I ouercame it/ so that the
coempcion was not asked ne tooke effecte.

Paulyne a counsaylour of Rome/ the ry-
chesses of the whiche Paulyne the houndes of
the paleys/ that is to saye/ thoffycers wolden
haue deuoured by hope & couetyse: yet drowe
I out of the iowes of hem that gapeden. And
for as moche as the payne of the accusacion
audged before me shulde not sodaunly hem-
ten ne punysshen wrongfully Albyn a coun-
saylour of Rome/ I put me ayenst the hates
and indignacions of the accusour Cipriany.
Is it not thay ynough sene that I haue pur-
chased great discordes ayenst my selfe: But
I ought be more assured ayenst other folke/
that for the loue of right wysnesse I neuer re-
serued nothynge to my selfe/ to hemwarde of
the kynges hall/ by whiche I were the more
syker. But through tho same accusours ac-
cusyng I am condempned. Of the nombre
of whiche accusours one Basilius that why-
lome was chased out of the kynges seruyce/
is nowe compelled in accusyng of my name/
for nede of forayne money. Also Opilion
and Gaudencius haue accused me: Al be it
so that the iustyce regall had whylom demed
them bothe to gone in to exyle for her trecher-
yes and fraudes without nombre. To which
iudgement they nolden not obey/ but defended
hem by the syckernesse of holy hõuses/ that is
to sayne/ fledden in to seyntewary: And thay
whay this was apperceyued by the kynge/ he
cõmaunded but if they vooded the cyte of Ra-
uenne by certayne daye assigned/ that menne
shulde marken hem on ỹ forhed with an hote
yron/ and chasen hem out of the towne. Nowe
what thynge semeth myght be lykened to this
cruelte/ for certes this same daye was recey-
ued the accusyng of my name by thylke same
accusours: What may be sayd herto: Hath
my studye and my counynge deserued thus/
or els the forsayde dampnacion of me made
them ryghtfull accusours or no: Was

not sa-

not fortune a ſhamed of this. Certes al had nat fortune ben aſſhamed that innocence was accuſed/ yet ought ſhe haue had ſhame of the fylthe of myne accuſours. But aſke thou in ſome of what gylte I am accuſed. Thou ſayne that I wolde ſauen the companye of the ſenatours. And deſyreſt thou to herey in what maner I am accuſed/that I ſhulde haue diſtourbed the accuſoure to bearen letters/ by whiche he ſhulde haue made the ſenatours gilty apēſt the kynges royal maieſte. O mayſtreſſe/what demeſt thou of this: ſhal I forſake this blame/that I ne be no ſhame to the: Certes I haue wolde it (that is to ſaye) the ſauacion of the ſenate/ ne I ſhal neuer ſette to wylne it/ and that I confeſſe and am a knowe/ but thentente of the accuſoure to ben diſtourbed ſhal ceaſe. Shal I cleape that a felonye or a ſynne that I haue deſyred the ſauacyon of the ordre of the ſenate. And certes had thylke ſame ſenate doone through her decretes and her iugemētes as though it were a ſynne and a felonye/ that is to wylne the ſauacyon of them. But ſolye that ſyeth alwaye to hym ſelfe/ may not chaunge the merite of thynges/ ne I trowe not by the iugement of Socrates that it were leful to me to hyde the ſothe/ ne aſſente to leaſynges: but certes howe ſo euer it be of this/ I put it to geſſen or puſen of the iugement of the and of wyſe folke/ of whiche thynge al the ordynaunce and the ſothe (for as moche as folke that ben to comen after our dayes ſhal knowen it) I haue put it in ſcripture and in remembraunce. For tou chyng the letters falſely made/ by whiche letters I am accuſed to haue hoped the fredome of Rome/ what apertayneth me to ſpeken therof. Of whiche letters the fraude had ben ſhewed apertely/ if I had had lybertie for to haue vſed and ben at conſeſſyon of myne accuſours/ the whiche thynge in al nedes hath great ſtrength. For what other fredome may men hopen: Certes I wolde that ſome other fredom might be hoped/ I wolde than haue anſwerde by the wordes of a man that hyght Tamus: for whan he was accuſed of Tanyus/ Ceſar Germanes ſonne/ that he was knowynge and conſentynge of a conuirsacion ymade agaynſte hym. Thus Tanius anſwerde thus: if I had wyſte it/ thou haddeſt not wyſt it. In whiche thynge forowe hath not ſo dulled my wytte/ that I playne onely that ſhrewde folke apparayen felonyes agaynſt vertue/ but I wonder greatly howe that they maye perfourme thynges that they haue hoped for to doone/ for why ne wyl ne ſhrewdneſſe that cometh peraduenture of our defaute. But it is ſyke a monſtre and a meruayle howe that in the preſence ſyght of god/maye ben acheued and perfourmed ſuche thynges/as euery felonous manne hath conceyued in his thought ayenſt innocentes. For whiche thynge one of thy fampſyers not vnſkylfully aſked thus. If god is: whence comen wicked thynges. But al had it ben leful that felonous folke/that nowe deſyren the bloode and the dethe of al good men/ And eke of the Senate/ haue wylned to gone diſtroyen me/ whome they haue ſene alwaye batayllen and defenden good men/ and eke al the ſenate/that had not deſerued of the fathers (that is to ſayne of the ſenatours) that they ſhulden wyl my diſtruction. Thou remembreſt wel as I geſſe/ ỹ whan I wolde doue or ſayne any thynge/ thou thy ſelfe alwaye preſente ruledeſt me. At the cyte of Verone whan that the kynge/ gredy of comen ſlaughter/caſte hym to tranſporten vpon al the order of the ſenate the gylte of his royal maieſtie/ of the whiche gylte that Albyn was accuſed/ with howe great ſykerneſſe of peryl to me/ defended I al the ſenate: Thou wotteſt wel that I ſaye ſothe/ ne I ne auaunted me neuer in praiſynge of my ſelfe. For alwaye whan any wight receyueth precyous renome in auauntynge of hym ſelfe or his werkes/ he amenuſeth the ſecree of his conſcience. But nowe thou mayſte well ſene to what ende I am comen for myne innocence/ I receyue payne of falſe felonye/ for gwerdone of very vertue. And what open confeſſyon of felonye had euer iudges ſo accordaunte in cruelte/ that is to ſayne/ as myne accuſynge hath/that eyther errour of mannes wytte/ or elis cōdicion of fortune/that is vncertayn to al mortal folke ne ſubmytted ſome of hem/ that

is to

into say/that it me richyned some wage to haue pyte or compassyon. For al though I had ben accused that I wolde brenne holy chirches/and strangle prestes with wicked swerdes/ or that I had garyshed dethe to al good men/ al gates the sentence shulde haue punissshed me present confessed & conuicte. But now I am remoued fro the eyte of Rome almost. v. C. (M). paas/I am without defence dampned to prysonyng and to dethe/for the fayres & bounties that I haue done to the senate. But o wel ben they worthy of merite/ as who saythe: nay there myght yet neuer none of hem be conuicte of suche a blame as myne is. Of whiche thyng myn accusours seen ful wel the dagate/for they wolde derken it with medlyng of some felonye. They baren me on honde and sayd/that I had polute and defouled my conscience with sacrilege for coueitise of dignyte: and certes thou thy selfe that arte planted in me/chacedest out of the siege of my corage al cuntyse of mortal thynges/ne sacrilege ne had no leaue to haue a place in me before thyn eyen. For thou droppedest euery day in myn eares & in my thought thylke cõmaundement of Pythagoras/ that is to say: Wey shal serue to god/and not to goddes. Ne it was not conuenient ne none nede to taken helpe of the foulest spyrites/ I that thou hast ordeigned and sette in suche excellence/that thou madest me lyke to god/ and ouer this the right cleane secrete chambre of myn house/ that is to saye my wyfe/ and the compayne of myn honeste fondes/and my wyues father/as wel holy as worthy to be reuerensed for his dedes/ defended me from al suspeccyon of suche blame. But o malyce. For they that accusen me taken of the philosophie seyth of so gret blame/ for they trowen that I haue had affynite to maleyce or enchauntement/ bicause that I am replenissshed and fulfylled with thy techynges and enformed of thy maneres. And thus it suffiseth not onely that thy reuerẽce ne auayle me naught/ but if thou of thy frewyl rather be blemyssshed with myne offencyon. But certes to the harmes that I haue/ there betydeth yet this encrease of harme/ that the gessynge and the iugement of moche folke ne loken no thyng to the deseruyes of thynges/ but onely to the auenture of fortune/and iuggen that only such thinges ben purueyed of god/whiche that temporal wyssulnesse cõmandeth. Glosa. As thus/that if a wight haue prosperite/he is a good man/ and worthy to haue that prosperyte/ & who so hath aduersyte/ he is a wicked man/ and god hath forsake hym/ & he is worthy to haue ỳ aduersyte. This is the opynion of some folke/ and therof cometh that good gessyng first of al thynge forsaked wretches. Certes it greueth me to thinke right now in dyuers sentences that the people sayth of me: And thus moche I say/that the last charge of contrarious fortune is this/ that whan any blame is layde vpõ a captife/men wenen that he hath deserued that he suffreth. And I that am put away from good men/ and dispoyled of dignytes/and defouled of my name by gessyng haue suffred turmentes for my good dedes. Certes me semeth that I se the felonous rouynes of wicked men habounden my ioy and my gladnesse: and I se that euery lotel shapeth hym to fynde newe fraudes for to accuse good folke/ & I se that good folke be ouerthrowen for drede of my peryl/ and euery luxurious turmẽtour dare done al felony vnpunyssshed/ and be excited therto by pestes/ & innocentes be not only dispoyled of syckernes/ but of defence. and therto me lyst to crien to god i this maner.

O stellifери conditor orbis/ Qui perpetuo nitus solio Rapido celũ turbine versas/ Legemq; pati fidera cogis/ Ut nunc pleno lucida cornu Totis fratris obuia flammis Condat stellas luna minores: Nunc obscuro pallida cornu Phebo propior lumina perdat. ꝛc.

Thou maker of the whele that beareth the sterres/ whiche that arte fastined to thy perdurable chayre/ and turnest the heuen with a rauesshyng sweygh/ and constraynest the sterres to suffre thy lawe: so ỳ the moone somtyme shinyng with her ful hornes/meting with al the beames of the sonne her brother/ hydeth the sterres that ben lesse. And somtyme whan the moone pale/ with her derke hornes

appro-

approcheth the ſonne/ leſeth her lightes: and that the euyn ſterre Heſperus/ whiche that in the firſte tyme of the nyght bringeth firſt her colde atyſyng/ commeth eft ayen her vſed courſe/ and is paſe vp the morowe at ryſinge of the ſonne/ and is than ycleped Lucifer. Thou ſtraineſt the daye by ſhorter dwellynge in the tyme of the colde wynter/ that maketh the leaues fal. Thou deryueſt the ſwyfte tydes of the night/ whan the hote ſomer is comen. Thy might attempreth the variaunt ſeaſons of the yere/ ſo that zepherus the debonaire wynde bringeth ayen in the firſt ſommer ſeaſon/ the leues that the wynde that hyght Boreas/ hath reſte away in Autumpne/ that is to ſaye/ the laſt ende of ſomer/ and the ſedes that the ſterre that hight Arcturus ſewe/ bewopen hygh cornes/ whan the ſterre Sirius enchaſeth hem. There is nothyng vnbounden from this olde lawe/ ne forleteth ỹ werke of his propre eſtate.

O thou gouernour/ gouernig al thynges by certayne ende/ why refuſeſt thou onely to gouerne ỹ werkes of men by de we maner: Why ſuffreſt thou/ that ſlyding fortune tourneth ſo great enterchaūges of thynges/ ſo that anoyous payne that ſhulde dulye puniſſhe ſelone/ puniſſheth innocentes: And folke of wicked maners ſytten in hygh chayres/ and annoyeng folke treden (and that vnryghtfully) on the neckes of holy men. And vertue clere and ſhynynge naturelly/ is hydde in derke derkeneſſes/ and the ryghtful man bereth the payn and the blame of the ſelons. Ne the forſwerynge/ ne the fraude couerde and wempte with a falſe coloure/ ne annopeth not to ſhrewdeneſſe/ the whiche ſhrewdneſſe/ whan hem lyſte vſen her ſtrength/ they troyſen hem to put vnder hem the ſouerayne kynges/ whiche that the people without nombre dreden. O thou what ſo euer thou be that knytteſt al bondes of thynges/ loke on theſe wretches/ erthes/ wemen that ben not a fouſe partie/ but a fayre parte of ſo great a werke: we ben tourmented in this ſee of fortune. Thou gouernour/ withdraw we and reſtreyne the rauiſſhyng flodes/ and feſten and ferme theſe erthes ſtable/ with thilke bonde/ with which thou gouerneſt heuen that is ſo large.

Per vbi continuato doloꝛe delatrauꝰ: ſilla vultu placido/ nihilq; meis querimonijs mota. Phi. Cum te (inquit) nebulꝰ lacrimarumq; caligo vidiſſem: iuxta mihi cyulamq; cognoui. Sed q̄ id lōgumquū eſſet exilium.

When I had with a contynual ſorowe ſowded ỹ broken oute theſe thynges/ ſhe with her cherr peruſing and nothyng amoued with my complayntes/ ſayd thus. Whan I ſaye the (quoth ſhe) ſorowful and wepyng/ I wyſt anon that thou were a wretch and exyled: but I wyſte neuer howe ferre thyne exile was/ if thy tale ne had yſhewed it me. But certes al bathou ferre fro thy countrey/ thou nart nat put out of it/ but thou haſt fayled of thy way/ goon a myſſe. And if thou haſte ſeuer for to wene that thou be put out of thy countre/ than haſt thou put out thy ſelfe/ rather than any other wyght hath/ for no wight (but thou thyſelf) ne might neuer haue doone that to the: For if thou remembre the of what countrey thou art borne/ it nys not gouerned by emperours ne by gouernement of multitude/ as weren the comunes of hem of Athenes/ but one lorde and one kyng/ and that is god/ that is lorde of thy countrey/ whiche that troyſeth him of the dwellyng of his citezyns/ and not for to put hem in exyle. Of the whiche lorde it is a ſeruage to be gouerned by the bridle of him and obey to his iuſtyce. Haſt thou forgoten thilke olde lawe of thy cyte/ in the whiche cyte this ordayned and eſtabliſſhed/ that what wyght hath ſeuer founde therin his ſeete or his hauſt than elſe where/ he maye not be exyled by no right from that place: For who ſo that is contayned within the paleys of thylke cyte/ therr is no drede that he maye deſerue to be exyled. But who that letteth the wyl tenhabyte therin/ he forletteth alſo to deſerue to be a citezeyn of thilke cyte. So that I ſay/ that the face of this place ne mouth me not ſo myche/ as thyne owne face. Ne I ne aſke not rather the walles of thy ſpytarye/ apparayled and wrought with yuore/ with glaſſe/ than after the ſeete of thy thought/ in whiche I put nat wyſſeny bookes/ but I put that/ that maketh bookes

worthy

worthy of price or praisse: ꝑ is to say sentence of my bookes. And certainly of thy desertes beseche I my comen good/ thou hast saide soth: but after ꝑ multytude of thy good dedes thou hast sayd yewe. And of the honestie or of the sufficiensse of thynges that ben opposed ayenst the/ thou haste remēbred thynges that be knowen to al folke. And of the sclaundres & fraudes of thyn accusours/ it semeth ꝑ to haue touched it forsothe right fully & shortly: al mighty the same thynges better and more plentuously ben couthe in the mouthe of the people that knoweth al this. Thou haste ese blamed greatly and cōplayned of the wrongful dede of the Senate. And thou haste sorowed for my blame/ & thou hast wopen for the dōmage of thy renoun ꝑ is apeyred: & thy last sorowe enchased ayen fortune/ complayned it the guerdons ne be not euenly polden to the desertes of folke. And in thy latter ende of thy woode muse/ thou prayedest that thylke peace that gouerneth the heuen shulde gouerne the erthe. But for that many trybulacions of passions haue assayled the/ and sorowe & pite and wepyng to drawen the dyuerssly/ as thou arte nowe feeble of thought/ mighty remedyes ne shullen not yet touchen the/ for whiche we wyllen somdele ben lyghter medicynes/ so that thylke passyons that be wayen harde in swellyng by perturbacions flowynge in to thy thought/ mowen waxe easy and softe to receyue the strength of a more mighty & more egre medycyne by an easier touchyng.

Cum phebi radijs graue Cancri sidus ardescit/ Tum qui larga negantibus
Iouis semina credidit Eiulus Cererisque/ Quernas pergat ad arbores. Nūq
purpureū nemus Lectus violas petas. ꝛc.

When that the heuy sterre of the Cancre enchaseth by the beames of Phebus: that is to sayne/ When that Phebus the sonne is in the signe of the Cancre/ who so seeth than largely his sedes to the feldes that refusen to receyue hem/ let him gone begyled of trust that he had to his corne/ to akehornes of okes. If thou wylte gather violettes/ ne go thou nat to the purple wodde/ whan the felde chirkynge agryseth of colde/ by the felnesse of the wynde that hyght Aquilone. If thou desyrest or wilt ben grapes/ ne seke thou not a gloutons honde to strayn and presse the stalkes of the vyne in the first sōmer season/ For Bacchus the god of wyne/ hath rather peuen his festes to Autumpne the latter ende of sōmer. God toseneth and assigneth the tymes ablynge hem to her propre offyces/ ne he suffreth not the stoundes/ which that hym selfe hath deuyded and constrayned to ben ymedled togyder: and for thy he that forletteth certayne ordynaunce of doyng by ouerthwing way/ he ne hath no glad issue or ende of his werkes.

Primum igitur/ pateris ne me pauculis rogationibus statum tue mētis attingere/ atq; tentare? vt quis modus sit tue curationis intelligam. ꝛc.

HIrste woldest ꝑ suffre me to touche and assay the estate of thy thought by a fewe demaundes/ so ꝑ I may vnderstande by/ the maner of thy curation? Aske me (qō I) at thy wyl/ that thou wolte/ and I shal answere. Tho sayd she thus: Whether wenest thou (qō she) that this worlde be gouerned sotysshly by happes and fortunes/ or els wenest thou that there be in it any gouernement of reason? D. Certes (qō I) I ne trowe nat in no maner that so certayne thynges shulde be moued by fortunous fortune/ but I wote wel that god/ maker and mayster is gouernour of his werke/ ne was neuer yet daye that might put me out of the sothfastnesse of that sentēce. P. So is it (qō she) for the same thyng sauge thou a lytel here besome/ and bewayledest and wepteste/ that onely men were put out of ꝑ cure of god/ for of al other thynges thou ne douteste not/ that they were gouerned by reason. But ough/ I wonder certes gretly why that thou arte sicke/ sens that thou arte put in so holsome a sentence: But let vs seken depper. I conjecte that there lacketh I not what. But say me this. Sens ꝑ thou ne douteste not ꝑ this world be gouerned by god/ with whiche gouernayle takeste thou hede that

it is

it is gouerned? Vnneth (qd I) knowe I the sentence of thy questyon / so that I ne maye not yet answeren to thy demaundes. I was not discryued (qd she) that ther ne fayled som what / by whiche the malady of perturbacion is crepte in to thy thought / so as the strength of thy paleys shynyng is opey: but saye me this. Remembrest thou what is thende of thinges? and whider thentencion of al kynde tendeth. I haue herde tolde it somtyme (qd I) but derkenesse hath dulled my memoue. Certes (qd she) thou wotest wel whence al thynges be comen & procedeh. I wote wel (qd I) and answerde / that god is begynnynge of al. And howe may this be (qd she) that sens thou knowest the begynnyng of thynges / that thou ne knowest nat what is the ende of thynges / but suche ben the customes of perturbacion / and this power they han / that they may moue a man from his place / that is to say / from the stablenesse and perfection of his knowynge / but certes they may nat al arace hym / ne alien hym in al: but I wolde that thou woldest answere to this. Remembrest thou that thou arte a man? I. Why shuld I not remembre that (qd I) Phi. Wayst thou not tel me than (qd she) what thynge is a man? Assest thou not me (qd I) whether that I be a resonable mortal beest / I wote wel and confesse that I am it. Wyste thou neuer yet that thou were any other thing (qd she). No (qd I). Nowe wel knowe I (qd she) other cause of thy maladie / and that ryght great: Thou hast lefte for to knowen thy selfe what thou art / through whiche I haue plainly founden the cause of thy maladie / or els the entre of recouerynge of thy heale. For why? For thou art confounded with forgetynge of thy selfe: for thou forsoudest that thou art exiled of thy propre goodes. And for thou ne wyste what is thende of thynges / for thy demest thou that felonous and wicked men / be mighty and welful: and for thou hast forgeten by whiche gouernementes the worlde is gouerned / for thy wenest thou that these mutacions of fortune fleten without gouernour. These ben the causes not only to maladie / but certes great causes to dethe: But I thanke the auctour and the maker of heale / that nature hath not al forleten the. I haue great nourisshyng of thyn heale / and that is the sothe sentence of gouernaunce of the worlde / that thou hyleuest that the gouernynge of it is not subiecte ne vnderput to the folye of these happes auenturous / but to the reason of god / & therfore doute the nothyng / for of this lytel sparke thyne heate of lyfe shal shyne. But for as mochel as it is not tyme yet of softer remedies / and that nature is of thoughtes thus discryued / that as ofte as they caste awaye sothe oppynions / they clothen hem in false oppynions. Of the whiche false opynyons the derkenesse of perturbacion weyeth vp / that confoundeth the very syght. And that derkenesse shal I somwhat assaye to maken thynne and weake / by lyght and meanelyche remedies / so that after that the derkenesse of dyscreynynge thynges be done awaye / thou maye knowe the shynynge of very lyght.

Nubibus atris Condita nullum Iuuare possunt Sydera lumen. Si mare volucris Turbidus auster Misceat ethra Vitrea dudum / Parq; serenus. &c.

The sterres couered with blacke cloudes ne mowe yeue adowne no light / if the trouble wynde the hyght Austre / turnynge & wakowing the see medleth the hete / that is to sayne the boylyng vp from the bottome. The wawes that were whilom clere as glasse / & lyke to the sayre bright dayes / withstande anon the syghtes of men / by the filthe and ordure that is resolued. And the flatynge streme that tryeleth downe downerlly from high mountaignes is arrested and resysted oft tyme by the encountrynge of a stone / that is departed and fallen from some roche. And for thy / if thou wylt sothen & deme sothe with clere light / and holden the way with a right pathe / weyue thou ioy / dryue fro drede / fleme thou hope / ne let no sorowe approche / that is to sayne: Let noy of these four passyons ouercome or blede the. For cloudy & derke is thylke thought & bounde with bandes / wher as these thinges reigne.

Explicit liber primus.

Post hec paulisper obticuit/ atq; vbi
affectionem meam modesta tacitur-
nitate collegit/ sic exorsa est. Si penitus
egrumdinis tue causas/ habitumq;. &c.

After this she stynt a lytel/ & after
that she had gadered by a temper
stylnesse myne attention/ as who
so might sayne thus. After these
thynges she stynt a lytel/ & whan
she aperceyued by a temper stylnesse/ that I
was ententyf to herken her/ she began to spekē
in this wyse. Yf I (qd she) haue vnderstond-
den and knowen vtterly/ the causes and þ ha-
bite of thy malady/ thou langwyssheste & arte
defeted for desyre and talent of thy rather for
tune. She þ yelde fortune onely that is chaū
ged as thou sayneste to the warde/ hath peruer
ted the clerenesse and the estate of thy corage.
I vnderstōdyng þ felle or manyfolde colourne
and descryptes of thylke meruayllous monstre
fortune/ and how she vseth ful flatteryng fa-
myliarite with hem that she enforceth to be-
gyle/ so longe/ tyl that she confounde with vn-
sufferable sorowe/ hem that she hath leste in
despyte vnpurueyed. And if thou remem-
bust wel the fynde/ the maneres/ and the de-
sertes of thylke fortune/ thou shalte wel knowe
that as in her thou neuer ne haddeste/ ne haste
lost any sayre thynge: Out (as I trowe) I
shal not greatly trauayle to donc the remem
bryng of these thynges. For thou were wonte
to hurtelen and despysen her with many wor-
des/ whan she was bladefyllyng and presente/
and parfadeste her with sentences that weren
drawen out of myn entre/ that is to saye/ of
myn enformacion: but no sodayne mutacion
ne betydeth not without a maner chaungyng
of corages. And so it is befal/ that thou arte a
lytel departed fro the peace of thy thought/
but nowe is tyme that thou drinke and taaste
some soft and delytable thinges/ so that whan
thy be entred within the/ it mowen make way
to stronger drankes of medycine. Come nowe
forthe therfore the fuasyon of swetnesse trthos
tyen/ whiche that gothe onely the right way/
whyle she forsaketh nat myn estatutes. And
with Rethorike come forthe musyke a damo-
sel of our house/ that syngeth nowe lyghter
modes or prolacions and nowe heuyer.
What eyleth the man? What is it þ hath caste
the in to mournyng & in to wepyng? I trowe
that thou haste sene some newe thing and vn-
couthe? Thou weneste that fortune be chaun-
ged a yen me/ but thou weneste wronge if that
thou wene alwaye tho ben her maneres. She
hath rather kepte as to the warde/ her propre
stablenesse in the chaūgyng of her selfe: right
suche was she whan she flatterde the and dis-
ceyued the/ with vnleful lyknynges and false
welefulnesse. Thou haste nowe knowen and
attepnte þ doubtous or double visage of this
blynde goddesse Fortune. She that yet couer-
eth and wympleth her to other folke/ hath
shewed her selfe euerydele to the: If thou ap-
proueste her and thynkeste that she is good/ vse
her maneres and playne the not/ and if thou
agryseste her falsse trecherye/ dispyse and caste
away her that playeth so harmefully/ for the
that is nowe cause of so moche sorowe to the/
shulde be to the cause of peace & of ioye. She
hath forsaken the forsothe/ the whiche that ne-
uer man maye be spēer that she ne shal forsa-
ken hym. Glose. But natheless some bokes
haue the texte thus. Forsothe she hath forsa-
ken the/ ne there nys no man spēer that she ne
hath not forsaken. Holdeste thou than thylke
welefulnesse precious to the that shal passen?
and is present fortune dere worth to the/ which
that nys not faythful for to dwel/ and whan
she gothe awaye that she bringeth a wight in
sorowe. for sens she maye not be with holden
at a mannes wyl/ she maketh hym a wrecche
whan she departeth fro hym. What other
thinge is flyttynge fortune/ but a maner she-
wyng of wretchednesse that is to come. For it
suffyseth not onely to loken on thinge that is
present before the eyen of a man/ but wysdom
loketh and mesureth thende of thynges/ and
the same chaūgyng from one to another/ that
is to sayne/ from aduersyte in to prosperyte/
maketh that þ manaces of fortune ne ben not
for to dreden/ ne the flateryngc to be despred.
Thus at laste it behoueth the to suffren with
euen wyl in patience/ al that is doone within
the floore of fortune/ that is to saye in this

worlde/ sithe thou hast ones put thy necke vn
der the yoke of her. For if thou wolt wnder a
lawe of wedyng and of dwelling to fortune/
whiche that thou haste chosen freely to ben thy
lady: Arte thou nat wrongful in that/ & ma
kest Fortune wroth and aspre by thyne impa
cience/and yet thou mayst nat chaungen her:
If thou cõmyttest and betakest thy sayles to
the wynde/ thou shalte be shouen/ nat thyder
that thou woldest/ but whider that the wynde
shoueth the. If thou castest thy seedes in the
feldes/ thou shuldest haue in mynde that the
peres ben amonges other whyle plentuous/
and otherwhile bareyn. Thou haste betaken
thy selfe to the gouernaunce of fortune/ & for
thy it behoueth the to ben obeysaunt to ỹ ma
ners of thy lady. Enforcest thou the to a
restien or withholden the swyftnesse and the
sweygh of her tournyng whele? O thou fole
of al mortal fooles/ if fortune began to dwel
stable/ she cessed than to ben fortune.

Her cum superba verterit vices dextra/
Exestuantis more fertur Euripi. Dudũ
tremendos seua proterit reges/ Humilẽq;
victi subleuat fallax vultũ. Non illa dura
miseros audit/haud curat fletus.&c.

When Fortune with a proude ryght
hande withtourned her chaũgyng
stoundes/ she fareth lyke the ma
ners of the boylynge Eurype.

Glosa. Eurype is an arme of the see/ that
ebbeth and floweth/ and somtyme the streme
is on o syde and somtyme on that other.

Texte. She crewel fortune casteth adoun
kynges/ that whylom weren ydrad/ and she
discrepuable enhaunceth vp the humble cheer
of him that is discomfyted: ne she neyther he
reth ne recketh of wretched weppynges. And
she is so harde/that she laugheth and scorneth
the weppynge of hem/ the whiche she hath ma
ked to wepe with her free wyl. Thus she play
eth and thus she proueth her strengthes/ and
she weth a great wonder to al her seruauntes/
if that a wyght is seen welefull/and ouerthro
we in an hour.

Vellem autem pauca tecum Fortune ip
sius verbis agitare. Tu igitur an nus po
stulet animaduerte. P. Quid tu o homo
tecum me agis cotidianis querelis.&c.

Certes I wolde pleden with the a fewe
thinges/ vsyng the wordes of fortune:
take hede now thy selfe/ if that she aske right.
O thou man/ wherfore maxest thou me
gultye vp thyne euery dayes playnynges?
What wronge haue I done the? What goo
des haue I berafte ỹ that were thyn: Stryue
or pleate with me before what ryght that thou
wylt/ of the possessiõ/of rychesses/or of dig
nites/and if thou mayst shewen me/ that euer
any mortal man hath receyued any of tho
thinges to ben his in propre/than wyl I grant
freely/ that thylke thynges were thyn/ whiche
that thou askest. Whan that nature brought
the forthe out of thy mothers wombe/ I recey
ued the naked and nedy of al thynges/ and I
nourisshed the with al my rychesses/and was
redy and ententyfe through my fauour to su
stayn the: and that maketh the nowe impacy
ent ayenst me. And I enuyronned the with
al habondaunce and shirynge of al goodes/
that ben in my right: nowe it sykeith me to
withdrawe myn honde. Thou hast had grace
as he that hath vsed forayne goodes. Thou
haste no right to playne the/ as thoughe thou
haddest vtterly forlorne al thy thynges. Why
playnest thou thanne? I haue doone the no
wronge. Rychesses/honours/and suche other
thiges ben of my right. Myn seruauntes fol
wen me for her lady: they come with me/& de
parten whan I wende. I dare wel affirme
hardely/ that if tho thynges/ of whiche thou
playnest that thou hast forlorn had ben thyn/
thou ne haddest not lorne hem. Shal I thus
be defended only to vse my right: Lettes it is
leful to the heuen to make clere dayes/and af
ter ỹ to ouercome tho same dayes with derke
nyghtes. The yere hath ese leaue to appa
rayle the vysage of the erthe/ nowe with flow
res/ and nowe with fruite/ and to confounde
hem somtyme with raynes and with reste.
The see hath ese hys ryght to ben somtyme
cruelme and bladisshyng/ with smothe weder/
and

and sometyme to be horryble with wawes and with tempestes. But couetyse of men/ ỳ may not be staunched/ shal it bynde me to be stedfaste/ sythen that stedfastnesse is vncouthe to my maneres. Duche is my strength/ and suche play I play comenly. I tourne the whirlyng whele with the turnyng cercle. I am glad to chaungen ỳ lowest to the hyest/ & the hyest to ỳ lowest. Worthe vp if thou wolte/ so it be by this lawe/ that thou ne holde nat that I do the wrong/ though thou descende adowne/ whan the reason of my play asketh it. Wyste thou nat howe Cresus kyng of Lydens/ of which kynge Cyrus was ful sore agaste/ a tyme befome that this Cresus was caught of Cirus/ and ledde to the fyre to be brende/ but that a rayne descended from heuen ỳ rescowed hym? And is it out of mynde howe that Paulus consul of Rome/ whan he had taken the kyng of Perseens/ weped pitously for the captuyte of the selfe kyng? What other thynge bewaylen the exemples of tragedyes/ but onely the dedes of fortune/ ỳ with an vnwarde strooke ouertourneth the realmes of great nobley. Glose. Tragedie is to sayne a dite of a prosperite for a tyme/ that endeth i wretchydnesse. Remembrest not thou in Grece whan thou were yonge/ that in the entre or in the seller of Jupiter there ben couched two tonnes/ that one is full of good/ that other is ful of harme? What right hast thou to playne/ if thou hast taken more plenteously of the good syde/ that is to sayne of richesse & prosperite? And what the if I be not al departed fro the? what ese if my mutabylite peneth the rightful cause of hope to haue yet better thyng? Nathelesse dismaye the not in thy thought. And thou that arte put in the comune reaume of al/ ne despise not to lyuen by thyn owne propre right.

Si quãtas rapidis flatib⁹ incit⁹ Põtus
Berias arenas/ Aut quot stelliferis edita
noctib⁹ Celo sidera iuiget: Tãtas fũdat
opes nec terrahat manũ Pleno copia cor-
nu/ Humanum mũer[illegible] aud ideo genus
Collet flere querelas. ꝛc.

Though plenty goddesse of riches/ hyde adowne with a ful horne/ & withdrawe not her hande/ as many richesse as the see turneth vp warde sandes/ whan it is moued with rauisshyng blastes/ or elles as many rychesses as there shynen bright sterres in the heuen on the sterry nyghtes: yet for al that mankynde nolde not cesse to wepe wretched playntes. And al be it so that god receyued her prayers/ and peueth hem as foole large moche golde/ & apparayleth couetous folke with noble or clere honoure: yet semeth hym haue gotten nothig. But alway cruel rauyne deuourynge al that they haue gotten/ sheweth other gapinges/ that is to saye/ gapen and desyren yet after mo rychesses. What budels myght with holden to any certayne ende the disordynate couetyse of men/ whan euer the rather ỳ it fleeteth in large pestes/ the more brenneth in hem the lust of hauing? Certes he ỳ quakyng & dredful weneth hym selfe nedy/ he ne lyueth neuermore ryche.

His igitur/ si pro se tecũ/ verbis fortuna loqueretur/ quid precto cõtrahiscres/ non haberes. Acsi quid est/ quo querelã tuam iure tuearis/ proferas oportet. ꝛc.

Therfore if that fortune spake with the for her selfe in this maner/ forsothe thou ne haddest not what thou mightest answere. And if thou haste any thyng/ wherwith thou mayste rightfully defenden thy complaynte/ it behoueth the to shewen/ & I wol yeuen to the space to tellen it. Boece. Certainly (qõ I) thanne these ben sayre thinges/ & anoynted with hony swetenesse of retholike and musike/ and onely whyle they be herde and sowne in eres/ they ben delitious. but to wretches it is a deper fe-lyng of harme/ this is to sayne/ that wretches felen ỳ harmes ỳ they suffre more greuously/ than the remedies or the delytes of these wordes may gladden or comforten hem. So that whan these thinges stynten for to sowen in eares/ the sorow that is inset greueth the thought P. Right so it dothe (qõ she) For these ne ben yet no remedies of the maladie/ but they ben a maner nourisshynge of thy sorowes/ that rebel ayeste thy curacion. For whan tyme is/ I shal moue & amuste suche thinges/ that perceyn hem ful depe. But nathelesse that thou shalte not

wyne to leten thy sese a wretche. Hast thou forgeten the nombre and ỳ maner of thy welefulnesse. I speake nat howe that the soueraygne men of the cytie tooke the in cure and kepynge/ whan thou were orphelyn of father and of mother/ and were chosen in affynite of princes of the cytee. And thou began rather to be lese and dere/than for to be a neyghbour/the whiche thynge is the moste precious kynde of any proppynquite or alyaunce ỳ may ben. Who is it that ne sayde tho that thou ne were right welefull/ with so great nobley as thy fathers in lawe/ and with the chastyte of thy wyfe/and with thoportunyte and noblesse of thy masculyne children/that is to sayne/thy sonnes. And ouer al this (me lyste to passen of comen thynges) howe thou haddest in thy youthe dignitees/ ỳ were warned to olde men/ but it delyteth me nowe to comen to the singuler vpheappynge of thy welefulnesse. If any frute of mortal thinges may haue any wight or price of welefulnesse/ myghtest thou euer forgeten for any charge of harme that might befall/the remembraunce of thylke day/ that thou sawe thy two sonnes made coũsailours/ and sadde togyther from thy house/ vnder so great assemble of senatours/ and vnder the blythnesse of the people: and whan thou sawe hem sette in the courte in hye chayers of dignitees. Thou rethoryen or pronouncest of kinges praysinges deseruedest glorie of wytte and of eloquence/ whan thou sittynge bytwene thy two sonnes counsaylours/ in the place that hyght Tyreo/and fulfylledest the byddyng of the moultytude of people that was spradde aboute the with so large praysinge and laude/ as men synge in victories. Tho gaue thou to fortune as I trowe/that is to saye/ tho feoffedest thou fortune with glorious wordes/ and deceyuedest her/ whan she acoyed & norissed the as her owne delyces. Thou bare away of fortune a peste/ that is to saye suche guerdon that she neuer pase to priuate man. Wilt thou therfore laye a restrynge with fortune: She hath nowe first twynkled vpon ỳ with a wicked eye. If thou consyder the nombre and the maner of thy blisses and of thy sorowes/thou mayst nat forsayen that nart yet blyssful. For if therfore thou weenest thy selfe not welefull/ for tho thinges that semeden ioyful ben passed/ there nys not why thou shuldest seme thy selfe a wretche/for thynges ỳ seme nowe sory/ passen also. Art thou nowe comen a sodayne gest in to the sadowe or tabernacle of this lyfe: or trowest thou that any stedfastnesse be in mãnes thinges: whan ofte a swyfte houre dissolueth the same man/ that is to saye/ whan the soule departed from the body. For al though that selde is there any sayethe that fortunous thynges wolde dwellen/ yet natheles the last day of a mannes lyfe is a maner dethe to fortune/and also to thilke that hath dweste. And therfore what weenest thou dare reche/ if thou foulete her in dyeng/or els that she fortune forlete the in fleyng awaye.

Cũ polo phebus roseis quadrigis Aurem spergere ceperit/ Pallet albentes hebetata vultus Flãmis stella prementibus. ꝛc.

Whan Phebus the sonne begynneth to spriede his clerenesse with rosen charottes/ than the sterre dymmed paleth her whyte cheres by the flambes of the sonne that ouercometh ỳ sterre light/that is to sayne whan the sonne is rysen/the day sterre weyeth pale & leseth her lyght. for the great lightnesse of the sonne/whan the wodde weyeth rody of rosen floures in the first sõmer season/thurgh the brethe of the wynde zepherus that weyeth warme/if the cloudy wynde Auster blowe falsyche/than gothe away fayrenesse of thornes. Ofte the see is clere and calme with mouyng floodes/and ofte the horrible wynde Aquilon moueth boyling tempestes and ouer whelueth the see. If the fourme of this worlde is so selde stable/& if it turneth by so many entrechaunges: wylt thou than trusten in the tomblyng fortunes of men: Wylte thou trowen oy slytyng goodes: It is certayne and establysshed by lawe perdurable/ that nothyng that is engendred is stedfast ne stable.

Tũ ego/ vera/ tñ/ cõmemoras o virtutũ olim nutrix: nec inficiari possũ ỳperitatis mee velocissimũ cursũ. Sed hoc est/ qõ. ꝛc.

Thou

Than sayd I thus: O mayre of al vertues thou sayest sothe/ nr I may not forsake the ryght swyfte course of my prosperite/ that is to sayne/ that the prosperite ne be comen to me wonder swyftly and soone. But this is a thynge that greatly smarteth me/ whan it remembreth me. For in al aduersytees of fortune/ the moost vnsely synde of contrarious fortune/ is to haue ben welefull. Philo. But that thou abyest thus (quod she) The tourment of thy false opynyon/ that mayst thou not rightfully blamen ne ascribe to thynges/ as who sayth: that thou hast yet many haboundances of thynges.

Lepus. For al be it so that the pouel name of auctorite welefulnesse mouyth the no wel/ it is lesul that thou reioy with me/ of how we many thynges thou hast yet plenty. And therfore/ if that thylke thynge that thou hadest for moste precious in al the rychesse of fortune be kepte to the/ yet by the grace of god vnwemmed and vndefouled: Mayst thou than playne rightfully vpon the myscheefe of fortune/ sythen thou hast yet thy best thynges: Lette yet lyueth in good poynt the fyue precious honoure of manlynde Symachus thy wyues father/ whiche that is a manne made of al sapience and vertue/ the whiche manne thou woldest bye with the pure of thyne owne lyfe/ the whiche he wayleth the wronges that men done to the/ and not for hym selfe. For he lyueth in sykernesse of any sentence putte ayenst hym. And yet lyueth thy wyfe/ that is attempre of wytte/ and passyng other women in clennesse of chastyte. And for I wolde closely shortly her vertues/ she is lyke her father: I tel the that she lyueth lothe of this lyfe/ and kepeth to the onely her goost/ and is al mate and ouercome by wepyng and sorowe for despyte of the. In the whiche thynge onely I moste graunten the/ that thy welefulnesse is amenused.

What shal I sayne eke of thy two sonnes twinfaldes/ of whiche as of children of her ayel there shyneth the sykernesse of the wytte of her father and of her eldefather: And sythen the soueraygn cure of al mortal folke is to soure her owne lyues/ if thou knowe thy selfe thy goodes make the more welefull. For yet ben there thynges dwelled to the warde/ that no man douteth that they ne ben more derre vnto the than thyne owne lyfe. And for thy due thy terres/ for yet is not euery fortune hateful to the warde: ne ouer great tempest ne hath not yet fallen vpon the/ whan thyne ancres clewen faste: that neyther wol suffren the comforte of this tyme present/ ne the hope of tyme cōmynge to passen ne to faylen.

Boe. And I praye (quod I) that fast mote they holden/ for the whyles that they holden/ holde so euer that thynges ben I shal wel fleten forthe and escapen. But thou mayst wel sen/ how we great appayrellen and arraye that me lacketh/ that be passed away from me.

Philo. I haue somwhat anounced and forthered the (quod she) if thou anoye not or forthynke nat of al thy fortune/ as who sayth: I haue somwhat comforted the/ so that thou tempest nat the thus with al thy fortune/ sythen thou hast yet thy best thynges. But I maye nat suffren thy delyces/ that playnest so weppynge and angupssihous/ for that there lacketh somwhat to thy welefulnesse. For what man is he that is so sadde or of so great parfyte welefulnesse/ that he ne sixpueth and playneth on some halfe/ agayne the qualyte of his estate: For why/ ful angupssihous thynge is the condycion of mannes goodes. For ether it cometh nat al togyder to a wyght/ or ela it ne lasteth nat parpetuel. For some may hath great rychesse/ but he is ashamed of his vngentyl lynage. And some manne is renowmed of noblesse of lynred/ but he is enclosed in so great angupssihe of nede of thynges/ that hym were leauer that he were vnknowe. And some manne habounden bothe in rychesse and noblesse/ but yet he he wayleth his chaste lyfe/ for he ne hath no wyfe. And some may so/ and sely maryed/ but he hath no chyldren/ and nourysseth his rychesses to straunge folke. And some manne is gladed with chyldren/ but he wepeth ful sore for the trespace of his sonne or of his doughter. And for this/ there ne accordeth no wight sykerly/

to the condicyon of his fortune. For alwaye to euery manne there is in somwhat that vnassayde he ne wotte nought/ or els he dredeth that he hath assayde. And adde this also/ that euery welefull manne hath a ful delycate felynge: so that but if al thynges be fallen at his owne wyl he is impacient/ or is nat vsed to haue none aduersyte/ anoy he is throwen adowne for euery lytel thyng. And ful lytel thynges bene tho/ that withdrawen the somme or the perfectyon of blyssfulnesse/ fro them that ben moost fortunate. Howe many menne trowest thou wolde demen hem selfe to bene almoost in heuen/ if they mighten attaygne to the lest partie of the remenaunt of thy fortune? This same place that thou clepest eyple/ is countrey to hem that enhabiten here. And for thy nothynge wretched/ but whan thou wenest it/ as who sayth: Thou thy selfe ne no wight elles nys a wrecche/ but whanne he weneth hym selfe he is a wretche by reputatioun of his courage. And agaynwarde: Al fortune is blyssful to a man by the agreablyte/ or by the egalyte of hym that suffreth it. What manne is that that is so welefull/ that nolde chaungen his estate/ whan he hath lost his pacyence? The swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is spraynt with many bytternesses. The whiche welefulnesse/ although it seme swete and ioyful to hym that vseth it/ yet maye it nat bene withholden/ that it ne gothe awaye whan it wol.

Than it is wel seene/ howe wrecched is the blyssfulnesse of mortal thynges/ that neyther it dureth perpetuel with hem/ that euery fortune receyuen agreably or equally/ ne it delyteth nat in al to hem that bene anguysshous.

O ye mortal folke/ what seke ye than blyssfulnesse out of your owne selfe: whiche is putte in your selfe? Errour and folly confoundeth you. I shal shewe the shortely/ the poynt of soueraygne blyssfulnesse.

Is there any thynge to the more precious than the lyfe? Thou wolte answere nay. Thanne/ if it so be that thou arte myghtye ouer thy selfe/ that is to sayne/ by tranquylyte of thy soule/ than haste thou thynge in thy power/ that thou woldest neuer leese: ne fortune maye nat benempne it the. And that thou mayest knowe that blyssfulnesse ne may nat stande in thynges that bene fortunous/ thporel/ now vnderstande and gather it togyther thus. If blyssfulnesse be the souerayngne good of nature that lyueth by reason: ne the ylke thynge is nat souerayngne good/ that maye be taken awaye in any wyse. For more worthy thynge is and more digne that the thynge/ that maye nat be taken away. Than sheweth it wel/ that the vnstablenesse of fortune maye nat attaygne to receyue very blyssfulnesse. And yet more ouer/ what may that this tomblynge welefulnesse leadeth/ eyther he wote that it is chaungable/ or els he wote it nat? And if he wote it nat/ what blyssful fortune maye there bene in the blyndenesse of ignorance? And if he wote that it is chaungable/ he mote alwaye bery a drede that he ne lese that thyng/ that he ne douteth nat/ but that he maye lesen it: As who sayth/ he mote alwaye be agaste/ lest he lese that that he wotteth right wel he maye lese: For whiche the contynuel drede that he hath/ ne suffreth hym nat to be welefull. Or els if he lese it/ he weneth to be dispyssed and foulcten. Certes ele that is a ful lytel good/ that is borne with very herte whanne it is lost/ that is to sayne/ that menne do no more force of the losse than of the haurynge. And for as moche as thou thy selfe arte he/ to whom it hath be shewed & preued by ful many demonstratyons/ as I wotte wel/ that the soules of menne ne mowen nat dyen in no wyse. And ele suche it is clere and certayne/ that fortunous welfulnes endeth by the dethe of the body: it may nat be douted/ that if dethe maye take awaye blyssfulnesse/ that al the fynde of mortal thynges ne discendeth in to wretchednesse by the ende of dethe. And sythen we knowe wel/ that many a man hath sought the fruite of blyssfulnesse/ nat onely with sufferynge of dethe/ but ele with suffrynge of paynes and tourmentes howe myght than this present lyfe make men blyssful/ sith that the ylke selfe lyfe endeth it ne moeth folde no wretchesse.

¶ Quisquis

¶ Quisquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere sedem/
Stabilisq; nec sonori
Aerei flatibus Euri/
Et fluctibus minantem.
Curat spernere pontum/
Montis cacumen alti/
Vitet arenas. &c.

WHat maner of folke / ware and stable that wyl founden hem a perdurable seate/ and ne wol nat be caste doune with the loude blastes of the wynde Eurus/ and wol dispise the see menasynge with floodes: Lette hem eschewe to buylden on the coppe of the mountaygne/ or in the moyste sandes. For if the sel wynde Auster/ tourmēteth the coppe of the mountaygnes with al her strengthes/ and the lose sandes refusen to beare the heauy weightes. And for thy/if thou wolte flye the perylloous auenture/ that is to saye/ of the worlde: haue myndē certaynly to sette thyne house of a mery seate in a lowe stone. For al thoughe the wynde troublyng the see/ thunder with ouerthrowynge/ thou that arte putte in quiete and welefulnesse by strength of thy palais shalte leade a clere age/ shoynynge the woodnesse and the pres of the ape/

Sed quoniam rationum tam in te mearum fomenta desecerunt/ paulo validioribus utendum puto. Age enim. Si tam caduca ac momentaria fortune. &c.

BUt for as moche as the nourisshynges of my reason defēden no more to the/ I trowe it were tyme to vsen a lytel stronger medicines. Now vnder stande here/ al were it so þ the pestes of fortune ne were nat bruiselle ne trēsitone/ what is there in hem that may be thyny any tyme/ or els that it ne is foule/ if that it be loked and consydred perfitely. Richesses ben they precious by the nature of thē self or els by the nature of the: What is most worthe of richesse/ is it nat golde or might of money assembled: Certes that golde and that money shyneth and peueth better renoume to hem that dispenden it/ than to thylke folke that mosereth it / for auarice maketh alway mucke hatreds to bene hated / and largesse maketh folke clere of renoume. For sithe that suche thynges as ben transferred from one man to another/ ne maye nat dwel with no manne: Certes than is that money precious / whan it is translated in to other folke / and shyneth to be had by vsage of large peuyng of him that hath peuen it. And also if al the money that is oueral in al the worlde were gathered to ward one man/it shulde make al other men to be nedy as of that. And certes a voice al hole/ that is to say without amenusynge/ fulfylleth to gider the herynge of moche folke. And whan they ben apassed/ nedes they maken hē poore/ that forgone tho richesses. O strayte & nedy clepe I these richesses/ sith that many folke ne maye nat haue it al/ ne al maye it nat comen to one man without pouerte of al other folke And the shynynge of gemmes that I cal precious stones/ draweth it nat the eyen of folke to hem warde/ that is to sayne for the beautie. But certes/if there were beautie or bountie in shinig of stones/ thilke clerenesse is of the stones hē selfe & nat of men. For whiche I wonder gretly þ men maruayleyn on suche thinges. For why/what thyng is it þ if it wāteth moueynge & ioynture of soule & body/ þ by vtt might seme a faire creature to hī þ hath a soule of re-

(soy. For

For al be it so / that gemmes drawen to hem selfe a lytel of the laste beautie of the worlde / thoro we the entente of her creatour / and the distynctioun of hem selfe: Yet for as moche as they ben putte vnder your excellence / they ne haue nat deserued by no way / that ye shulde marueyleu on hem. And the beautie of feldes delyteth it nat myche vnto you: Boe.

Why shulde it nat delyten vs / sythe that it is a ryght fayre porpoun of the ryght fayre werke / that is to sayne / of this worlde.

And right so ben we gladed somtyme of the face of the see whan it is clere: And also marueyleu we on the heuen and on the sterres / & on the sonne and on the moone: Philoso.

Apertayneth (quod she) any of the vile thynges to the: Why darest thou gloufye the in the shynynge of any suche thynges: Arte thou distynigued and embelyssed by the springynge floures of the fyrste somer season: Or swelleth thy plentie in fruites of somer: Why arte thou rauysshed with ydel ioyes: Why embracest thou straunge goodes as they were thyne: Fortune ne shal neuer make that suche thynges be thyne / that natur: of thynges hath maked forayne fro the: Sothe it is / that withouten doute the fruites of the erthe oughten to be to the nourisshynge of bestes. And if thou wolte fulfyl thy nede / after that it suffyseth to nature / than it is no nede that thou sese after the superfluite of Fortune. For with ful fewe thynges and with ful lytel thynges / nature hath her apeyde. And if thou wolte achoken the fulfyllyng of nature with superfluitees: Certes the vile thynges that thou wolte thriften or pouren in to nature / shulden ben vnioyful to the / or els anoyous. Wenest thou ese / that it be a fayre thynge to shyne with dyuers clothynges: Of whithe clothynge if the beautie be agreable to loken vpon / I wol marueyleu on the nature of the mater of the vile clothes / or els on the woise man that wrought hem. Dothe also a longe route of meyny make the a blyssful manne: The whiche seruauntes if they ben vicious of condicions / it is a great charge and distruction to the house / and a great enemy to the lorde hym selfe. And if they ben good menne / how we shal straunge and forayn goodnesse be putte in the nombre of thy richesses: So that by al these forsayd thynges / it is clerely shewed / that newer one of the vile thynges that thou accomptedest for thy goodesse / nas nat thy good. In whiche thynges if there be no beautie to be desyred / why shuldest thou be sone to lese them: or why shuldest thou employe the to holde hem: For if they ben fayre of their owne kynde / what apertayneth that to the: For also wel shulden they haue ben fayre by them selfe / though they were departed from al thy richesses. For why / fayre ne precious were they nat / for that they comen amonge thy richesses. But for they semed fayre and precious / therfore thou haddest leauer reken hem amonge thy richesses. But what desyrest thou of fortune with so great a fare: I trowe thou seyest to dryue away nede with habundaunce of thynges. But certes it tourneth you al in to the contrary. For why / certes it nedeth ful many helpynges to kepen the dyuersite of precious hostylmentes. And sothe it is / that of many thynges they haue nede / that many thynges haue. And agaynwarde / of lytel thynge nedeth hym that measureth his fyl after the nede of kynde / and nat after the outrage of coueityse. It is so than / that ye may haue no proper good sette in you / for suche ye moten sese outwarde in forayne and subiecte thynges. So is than the condicion of thynges tourned vp so downe / that a manne that is a diuyne berst / by merite of his reason / sheth that hym selfe nys neither fayre ne noble but if it be through possessyoun of hostylmentes / that ne han no soules. And certes al other thynges ben apayde of her owne beauties: But ye men that be semblable to god by your resonable thought / desyren to apparelen your excellent kynde of the lowest thynges. Se ye vnderstonden nat how great a wronge is don to your creatour / for he wolde that mankynde were moost worthy and noble of any erthely thynge / and ye thresten down your dignite

kyndes

be metten þ lowest thynges. For if that al the good of euery thynge be more precious/ than is thylke thynge/ whose that the good is/ sithe yt semeth that the foulest thynges bern your goddesse: than submytten ye and putte your seluen vnder the foulest thynges by your estymation. and certes this betydeth nat without your deserte. For certes suche is the cõdytion of al mankynde/ that onely whan it hath vnowynge of it selfe/ than passeth it in nobleesse al other thynges. And whan it forletteth the knowyng of it selfe/ than it is brought be neth al beestes. For why/ al other spurnge beestis han of vnde to vnowen nat hem self/ but whan that men leten þ vnowyng of hem self/ it cometh hem of vyce. But how blode sheweth the errour and the folp of you men/ that weenen that any thyng maye ben apparayled with straunge apparrimẽtes: but forsoth that may nat be done. For if a wight shyneth with thynges that ben put to hym: As thus. If thylke thynges shynen with/ whiche a man is apparelled: Certes thylke thynges ben cõmended and praysed/ with whiche he is apparayled: but natheleesse/ thynge that is couered and wrapped vnder þ/ dwelleth in his fylth. And I denp that thylke thynge be good/ that anoyeth him that hath it. Gabbe I of this: Thou woste saye nay. Certes rychesse haue anoyed ful ofte hem/ þ han had tho rychesse. sithe that euery wrecched shrewe is for his wrecchednesse the more gredy after other folkes rychesses/ where so euer it be in any place/ be it golde or precious stones/ and weneth him onlye most worthy that hath hem. Thou than that so besy diedest nowe the swerde and the speare/ if thou haddest entred in the pathe of thy lyfe anoyde wayfaryng man/ than woldest thou synge before the theef/ as who saith a poore man that beareth no rychesse on hym by the waye/ may boldly synge before thewes/ for he hath nat wherof to be robbed. O precious and ryght clere is the blyssfulnesse of mortal richesses/ that whan thou hast goten it/ than hast thou some thy sekernesse.

Felix nimtũ prior etas Contenta fidelibus aruis/ Nec inerti pdita luxu: Facilisque sera solebat Jeiunia soluere glande/ Nec bacchia munera norat Liquido condũdere melle/ Nec lutida vellera serũ. &c.

Blyssful was the firste age of men/ they helden hem apayde with the metes that the free we feldes broughten forthe/ they ne dystroyed nor discryued nat hem selfe with outrage/ they weren wonte lyghtly to slaken her hunger at eurn with akehornes of okes/ they ne coude nat medel the peste of Bacchus to the clere hony/ that is to sayne/ they coulde make no piment or clarre: Ne they coude nat medel the bright fleeces of the countre of Seres with the venym of Tiry/ this is to sayn/ they coude nat dyen white fleeces of Syrien coũtre with the blode of a maner shelfysshe/ that men synden in Tyre/ with whiche blode men dyen purple. they slepten holsome slepes vpon the grasse/ and dronken of the rennyng waters/ and lyen vnder the shadowes of the hye Pyne trees. Ne no gestes or straunger ne carfe yet the hye see with oores or with shippes/ ne they ne hadden seyn yet no newe strondes to seken marchandise in to dyuers countrees. tho weren the cruel clarymons ful hust and ful styl. Ne blode yshad by egre hate/ ne had deyed yet armures. For where to/ or whiche woodnesse of enemyes wolde yrist mouen armes/ whan they sawen cruel woundes/ ne none merdes be of blode yshad? I wolde þ our tymes shulde turne ayen to tholde maners. But the anguissous loue of hauig in yolle burneth more cruelly than þ mountayn of Ethna/ þ ay brẽneth. Alas/ what was he that yrist dalfe vp þ gobbettes or the weyghtes of golde/ couered vnder erthe/ & the precious stones þ wolden haue be hydde? He dalfe vp precious perple/ that is to sayn/ that he þ hem first vp dalfe/ he dalfe vp a precious peryl/ for why/ for the preciousnesse of suche thyng hath many man ben in peryl.

Quid autem de dignitatibus/ potestatisq; dicam/ quas vos/ vere dignitatis/ ac potestatis inscij/ celo exequatis? Que si in improbissimũ quemq; ceciderint. &c.

Thus

But what ſhal I ſaye of dignitees and
powers/the whiche ye men that neyther
knowen very dignite ne very power/ areyſen
hem as high as the heuen: the which dignites
and powers/if they come to any wicked man/
they don as great domages and diſtructions/
as dothe the flambe of the moũtayne Ethna/
whan the flambe walweth vp/ne no deluuy
ne dothe ſo cruel harmes. Certes ye remem-
bre wel (as I trowe) that thylke dignyte that
men cleape the impetye of counſaylours/ the
whiche whylom was begynnyng of fredom/
your elders coueyted to haue done away that
dignite for the prude of the counſaylours. And
ryght for that ſame your elders before that
tyme had done away out of the cyte of Rome
the kynges name/ that is to ſayne/ they nolde
haue no lenger no kyng. But nowe/ if ſo be
that dignitees and powers ben yeuen to good
men/the whiche thing is ful ſelde/ what agre-
able thynges is there in tho dignitees and po-
wers/but onely the goodneſſe of folke that vſen
hem? And therfore is it thus/that honour
cometh not to vertue bycauſe of dignyte: and
ayenwarde / honoure cometh to dignyte for
cauſe of vertue. But whiche is thilke your
derewoorth power that is ſo clere and ſo requi-
rable? O ye erthly beeſtes/ conſyder ye not
ouer whiche thyng that it ſemeth that ye haue
power? Nowe if thou ſawe a mouſe amonge
other myce/ that chalenged to him ſelfwarde
right & power ouer al other myce/ howe great
ſcorne woldeſt thou haue of it? Gloſa. So
fareth it by men/the body hath power ouer the
body: for if thou loke wel vpon the body of a
wight/ what thing ſhalt thou fynde more freel
than is mãkynde? the whiche men ful ofte be
ſlayne by byting of flyes/ or els with entryng
or crepyng wormes in to the priuytees of mã-
nes body. But where ſhal men fynden any
man that may exerciſen or haunten any right
vpon an other man/ but onely on his body/or
els vpon thynges that ben lower than the bo-
dy/ the whiche I clepe fortunes poſſeſſyons?

Wayſte thou haue euer any cõmaundement
ouer a free corage? Wayſte thou remeue fro
the eſtate of his propre reſte/ a thought that is
cleuing togyder in him ſelfe by fiedfaſt reſon?
As whylom a tyraunt wened to confounde
a free man of corage/ & he wende to conſtreyn
hym by tourmentes/to maken hym diſcouery
and accuſen folke/ that wyſten of a conſpira-
cion/ whiche I cleape a confederacie that was
caſte ayenſt this tyraũt: but this fre man bote
of his owne tonge/ and caſte it in the vyſage
of thylke woode tyraunt. So that the turmen
tes that this woode tyraunt wende to haue
made mater of cruelte/this wyſe man made it
mater of vertue. But what thynge is it that
a man may do to an other man/ that he ne
maye receyuen the ſame thyng of other folke
in hym ſelfe: Or thus: What may a man don
to folke/ that folke ne maye doone to hym the
ſame? I haue herde tolde of Buſirides that
was wonte to ſleen his geſtes/ that herbroden
in his houſe: and he was ſlayne hym ſelfe by
Hercules that was his geſte. Regulus had
taken in bataple many men of Affryke/ and
caſte hem in to fetters: but ſone after he muſt
peuen his handes to be bounde with the chey-
nes of hem that he had whylom ouercomen.
Wenеſt thou than/that he be mighty that hath
power to doone a thyng/ that other ne maye
done in him ỹ he hath in other? And yet more
ouer/ if ſo were that theſe dignytes or powers
hadden any ꝓpre or naturel goodnes in hem/
neuer nolde they comen to ſhrewes. For cõtra
ryous thinges ne ben wont to ben yſelouſhy-
ped togyther. Nature refuſeth that contra-
ryous thynges ben ioyned. And ſo as I ſayn
in certayne that wicked folke haue dignytes
ofte tyme/ than ſheweth it wel that dignytes
& powers ne ben not good of her owne kynde/
ſens that they ſuffren hem ſelfe to cleauen or
ioynen hem ſelfe to ſhrewes. And certayne the
ſame thyng may I moſt dignely ingren and
ſayne of al the peſtes of fortune/ that moſte
plenteouſly comen to ſhrewes/ of whiche pe-
ſtes I trowe it ought be conſydred that no man
douteth that he is ſtronge/ in whome he ſeeth
ſtrengthe: and in whom ſwyftneſſe is/ ſothe it
is that he is ſwyfte. Alſo muſyke maketh
muſyciens/ and phyſike maketh phyſiciens/
and rethoryke eke rethoriẽs. For why/the na-
ture of euery thynge maketh his propertie/

ne it is not entremedled with thefferte of couetouse thynges. But certes rychesses may not restrayne auarice vnstanched. Ne power ne maketh nat a man mighty ouer hym selfe/ whiche that vicious lustes holden distrayned with chaynes that ne mowen not be vnbounden. And dignitees/ that be yeuen to shrewde folke/not onely ne maketh hem not digne/but sheweth rather al openly/ that they ben vnworthy and indigne. And it is thus. for certes ye haue hope to cleape thynges with false names/that beaten hem in al the countraye/ the whiche names ben ful ofte reproued by the estate of the same thynges. So that these vile rychesses ne oughten not by right to be cleped rychesses/ ne suche power ne ought not to be cleped power/ ne such dignyte ne ought not to be cleaped dignyte. And at laste I maye conclude the same thynge of al the pestes of fortune: In whiche there ys nothynge to be desyred/ne that hath in hym selfe naturel bountee/ as it is wel yseene/for neyther they ioynen hem not alwaye to good men/ ne maken hem alwaye good/ to whom they ben ioyned.

Nouimus/quãtas dederit ruinas Urbe flãmata/ patribusq; cedis/ Fratre q̃ quondam ferus interẽpto Matris cĩulo madiuit cruore. Corpus et vilu gelidum pererrans Mza non tinxit lachrymis: sed esse Crinos extinctu potuit decoris. ꝛc.

I haue wel knowen/ how many grete harmes & distructions were doone by themperour Nero. He lete brennen the cyte of Rome/ and made slee the senatours/ and he cruel whylom slough his brother. And he was made mopsie with the bloode of his mother/ that is to say/ he let sleen & slytten the wombe of his mother/ to sene where he was conceyued/ and he losed on curry halue of her deed colde body/ ne no terre wette his face/but he was so harde herted that he myght be domes man or iuge of her deed beautie. And natheless yet gouerned this Nero by ceptre al the people that Phebus may sene comyng fro his vtereste aryslinge/ tyl he hyde his beames vnder the wawes/ that is to sayne/ he gouerned al the peoples by ceptre imperyal/ that the sonne gothe aboute fro Est to west. And eke this Nero gouerned by ceptre al the peoples that be vnder the colde sterris/that highten the Septentrions: that is to sayne/ he gouerned al the peoples that be vnder the partye of the North. And eke Nero gouerned al the peoples that the violent wynde Nothus skorclyth and baseth the brennyng sandes by his drie heate/ that is to saye/ al the peoples in the Southe. But yet ne might not al his power tourne the woodnesse of this wicked Nero. Alas it is a greuous fortune/ as ofte as a wicked swerde is ioyned to cruel venym/ that is to saye/ venemous cruelte to lordshyppe.

Tũ ego. Scis (inq̃) ipsa/ minimũ nobis ambitionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatam. Sed materiã gerendis rebus optauimus/quo ne virtus tacita conscelesceret. P. Et iuia. Atqui hoc vnum est. ꝛc.

Thou saydest I thus. thou woteste wel thy selfe/ that the couetise of mortal thynges ne haddeth neuer lordshyp in me. But I haue wel despred mater of thynges to doone/ as who sayth/ I despise to haue mater of gouernaũces ouer compaignes/ for vertue shuld not elden: that is to sayne/ that lesse er that he weyt olde/ his vertue that saye nowe shuld not perisshe vneyercysed in gouernaunce of cõmune: for whiche men might spekeh or wryten of his good gouernemẽt. P.

Forsothe (quod she) and that is a thing that may drawen to gouernaunce suche hertes as ben worthy and noble of her nature: But natheless it maye not drawen or telleh suche hertes as ben pbrought to the ful perfection of vertue/ that is to sayne couetyse of glorie and renome/to haue wel administred the commune thynges/or doone good desertes to prosyte of the cõmune. For se nowe and consyder/ howe lytel and howe voyde of al puce is thylke gloue/ certayne thyng is as thou hast lerned by the demonstration of Astronompe/ that al the enuyronnyng of the erthe aboute/ ne haste but the reason of a puche/ at the regarde of the greatnesse of the heuen/ that is to sayne/

to sayne/that if ther were maked comparison of the erth to ỹ gretnesse of heuen/men wolde iudgen in al that ne helde no space. Of the whiche lytel region of this worlde/the fourth parte of the erthe is inhabyted with synynge beestes that we knowen/as thou haste thy selfe yherned by Ptholome that proueth it.

And if thou haddest withdrawen and abated in thy thought for thylke fourthe partye/as moche space as the see and the mareys conteyneth and ouergone: as moche space as the region of drought ouerstretcheth/that is to sayn sandes and desertes/wel vnneth shulde there dwellen a right straite place to the habitacion of men. And ye that be enuyronned and closed with the lefte parte of thylke parte/thynken ye manifesten or publisshen your renome and doone your name for to ben borne forthe. But your glorie that is so narow & so straite throngen in to so lytel boundes/how myche contayneth it in larges and in great doynge. And also sette therto/that many a nacyon diuers of tonge and of manere/and eke of reason of her synynge/ben inhabyted in the close of thylke habytacle/the whiche nacyons what for difficulte of wayes/and what for dyuersyte of langage/and what for defaulte of vsage/and entrecommynyng of marchandyse: not onely the names of synguler men ne may not stretchen/but eke the fame of cyties maye not stretchen. At the last/certes in the tyme of Marcus Tullius as hym selfe writte in his boke ỹ the renome of the comune of Rome ne had not yet passed ne clomben ouer the mountayne that hyght Caucasus/& yet was Rome wel wayen and redoubted of the Parthes/and eke of other folke enhabytinge aboute. Seest thou not than how straite and how compressed is thilke glorie that ye trauayleu a boute to shewen and to moultiplye? Maye than the glorie of a synguler romayne stretchen thyder as the fame of the name of Rome maye not clymben ne passen? And eke seest thou not that the maners of dyuers folke and her lawes ben discordante amonges hem selfe/so that thylke thyng that some men iuge worthy of praysing/other folke iugen that/that is worthy of tourment. And herof cometh it that though a man delyteth hym in praysinge of his renome/he may not in no wyse bringen forthe ne spreden his name to many mouthe peoples/and therfore euery man ought to be apayde of his glorie ỹ is publysshed amonge his owne neyghbours/and thylke noble renome shal be restrayned within the boundes of tho maners folke. But how many a man that was ful noble in his tyme/hath the wrecches and nedy forgetyng of writers put out of mynde and done away/al be it so that certein thylke thinges prosperen lytel/the whiche thinges and writynges longe and derke elde do away bothe hem and eke her auctours. But ye men semen to getten you a perdurablite whan ye thynken in tyme compynge your fame shal lasten. But natheles/if thou wylte make comparyson to the endeles spaces of eternyte. What thing haste thou/by whiche thou myght reioysen the of longe lastynge of thy name? For if there were made comparyson of the abydyng of a moment to ten thousande wynter/for as moche as bothe tho spaces ben ended/for yet hath the momente some portion of it/al though it be lytel? But natheles/se thylke selfe nombre of yeres/and eke as many yeres as therto may be multyplied/ne may not ayres be comparisoned to the perdurablite that is endeles. For of thynges whiche that haue ende may be made comparyson/but of thynges whiche that ben withouten ende/to thynges that haue ende may be maked no comparyson. And for thy is it that al though renome as of longe tyme as euer the lyste to thynken/were thought/to ỹ regarde of the eternyte that is vnstaunchеable and infynite/it ne shulde not only seme lytel/but plainly right nought. But ye semen certes ye can do nothing a right but if it be for the audyence of the people/and for pore rumours. And ye forsaken the great worthynesse of conscience and of vertue/and ye seken your guerdones of the smale wordes of straunge folke. Haue now here and vnderstande in the lyghtnesse of suche pure and bryne glorie/how a man shouned festymally and merely suche vaunte. Whylome there was a man that had assayed with sturynge wordes an other man/the which not for vsage

of very

of very vertue/ but for proude vayne glorie/ hath taken vpon him falsely ỹ name of a philosophre. This rather may that I spake of/ thought he wolde assay/ whether he thilke were a philosophre or no/ that is to saye/ if that he wolde haue suffred sightly in parpence/ the wronges that were done to him. This sayned philosophre tolde patience a stedel whyle: and whan he had receyued wordes of outrage/ he as in stirynge ayen a troysyng of him selfe/ sayde at laste thus. Vnderstandest thou not/ that I am a philosophre: That other man answerde ageyne bytingly and sayd: I had wel vnderstãde it/ if thou haddest holden thy tonge styl. But what is it to these noble worthy men/ ye artes of suche folke speke I ỹ seken glorie with vertue: What is it (qõ she) what atteyneth fame to suche folke/ whan the body is resolued by the dethe at the last: for if so be that men deye in al/ that is to say body and soule/ the whiche lyeng our reason defendeth vs to lyue: than is there no glorie in no wyse. For what shulde thilke glorie be/ whan he/ of whom thilke glorie is sayde to be/ nys ryght naught in no wyse. And if the soule whiche that hath in it selfe science of good werkes/ vnbounden from the prison of therthe/ wendeth fully to the heuen/ despyseth it not than al erthly occupacion/ and beynge in heuen reioyseth that it is exempt from al erthly thynges: as who sayth/ than receyueth the soule neuer of no glorie of renome of this worlde.

Quicunq; solam mente præcipiti petit/
Humumq; credit gloriam/ Late patres
Terris cernãt plagas/ Actumq; terrarum
Situ Vrens repiere nõ valẽtis ambitu. &c.

Who so that with ouerthrowynge thought only seketh glorie of fame/ and weneth ỹ it be souerayn good/ let him loken vpon the brode shewynge countreys of the heuen/ and vpon the streyte serte of this erthe/ and he shal be assha med of thencrease of hes name/ that maye not fulfyl the stedel compas of the erthe. O what swelleth proude folke to lyften vp her nekkes in pryde in the derkly pose of this worlde: For al though that renome yspradd passyng to sondy peoples/ goth by diuers tonges/ and al though great houses of Kynredes shynen by clere ytes of honours/ yet natheles dethe dispyseth al high glorie of fame/ and dethe wrappeth togyther the hygh heedes and the lowe/ & maketh egal and euen the hyest with the lowest.

Where wonen nowe the bones of trewe Fabricius: What is nowe Brutus/ or sterne Caton: The thynne fame yet lastyng of her ydle names/ is marked with a fewe letters. but although that we haue knowen the sayre wordes of ỹ fame of hem/ it is not peuen to knowen hem that ben derd and cõsumpt. lyggeth than styl al vtterly vnknowable/ ne fame ne maketh you not knowe. And if ye wene to lyue the lenger for wynde of your mortal name/ whan one cruel day shal rauisshe you: than is the seconde dwellyng to you close. The firste dethe he clepeth here the departing of the body/ and the seconde dethe here the stintynge of the renome of fame.

Sed ne me incrorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes/ est aliqãdo/ cum de hominũ fallax illa non nihil bene mereatur: tum scilicet cum se aperit. &c.

But for as moche as thou shalt not wenen (qõ she) that I beare an vntretable batayle ayenst fortune/ yet somtyme it befalleth that she (discreuable) deserueth to haue right good thanke of men: and that is whan she her self openeth/ and whan she discouereth her fronte/ and sheweth her maners. Peraduenture yet vnderstãdest thou not that I shal say. It is a wondre that I desyre to tel/ and therfore vneth may I vnplyten my sentence with wordes. for I deme that cõtrarious fortune profyteth more to men than fortune debonayre. For alwaye whan fortune semeth debonayre/ than she lyeth falsly/ byhetyng the hope of welfulnesse. But forsothe contrarious fortune is alway sothfaste/ whan she sheweth her selfe vnstable through her chaungyng. The amiable fortune discreueth false: the contrarye fortune teacheth. Thamyable fortune blyndeth with the beautie of her false

F.v. goodes

goodes/ the hertes of folkes that vsen hem. The contrarye fortune vnbyndeth hem/ with the vnowyng of freele welefulnesse. Thamyable fortune mayste thou seme alway wyndy and flowyng/ & euer misvnowing of her selfe. The cõtrary fortune is attempre and refrayned and wyse/ thorowe experise of her aduersyte. At the laste amyable fortune with her flaterynges/ draweth myswandring men fro the souerayne good: the contrarious fortune leadeth ofte sithe ayen to sothefaste goodes/ and haleth hem ayen as with an hoke. Weneste thou than that thou oughtest to leten this a lytel thyng/ that this aspre and horrible fortune hath discouered to the/ the thoughtes of thy trewe frendes? For why/ this pyke fortune hath departed and vncouered to the bothe the certayne vysages/ and eke the doutous vysages of thy felawes. Whan she departed away fro the/ she toke away her frendes and lafte the thy frendes. Nowe whan thou were ryche and welefull/ as the semed/ with howe myckel woldeste thou haue bought the ful vnowynge of this/ that is to sayne/ the vnowyng of thy very frendes? Nowe playne ỹ not than of rychesse lorne/ sythe thou hafte founde the moste precious vynde of rychesse/ that is to sayne/ thy very frendes.

Quod mundus stabili fide Concordes variat vices/ Quod pugnancia semina Fœdus perpetuũ tenent. &c.

That the worlde with stable fayth varyeth accordable chaungynges/ that the contrarious qualytees of elementes holden amonge hem selfe alpaunce perdurable/ that Phebus the sonne with his golden charyot bringeth forth ỹ rosy day/ that the moone hath cõmaundement ouer the nyghtes: which nyghtes Espertus the euen sterre hath/ that the see gredy to flowen constrayneth with a certayne ende his floodes/ so that it is not lefful to stretche his brode termes or boũdes vpon the erthe: Al this ordynaunce of thynges is bounden with loue/ ỹ gouerneth erthe & see/ & also hath cõmaundement to the heuen. And if this loue slaked the bridels/ al thynges that nowe louen hem togyther wolden make batayle contynuelly/ & stryuen to fordone the fasson of this worlde/ the whiche they nowe leden in accordable fayth/ by fayre mouynges. Thus loue holdeth togyder people ioyned w^{t} an holy bonde/ and hyghteth sacrament of mariage of chaste loues. And loue endeth lawes to true felawes. O welefull were mankynde if thilke loue that gouerneth the heuen/ gouerned your corages.

Here endeth the seconde boke/ and foloweth the thirde.

IAm cantum illa finierat/ cum me auidendi auidum/ stupẽtemq; attentus adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo detinebat. Itaq; paulo post/ O inquam lumen falloru solamẽ animoru/ quantũ me. &c.

BY this she had ended her songe: whan the swetenesse of her dyte had throughpersed me/ that was desyrous of herkenyng. And I astonyed had yet stretyght myn eres/ that is to sayne/ to herken the bette what she shulde saye/ so that a lytel here after I sayde thus. O thou that arte sourayne comforte of corages anguisshous/ so thou hast remembred and norissed me with the weyght of thy sentences/ and with delyte of syngyng/ so that I trowe not that I be vnperegal to the fyrdes of fortunes who sayth/ I dare wel as wel suffren al thassautes of fortune/ and wel defende me from her. And tho remedyes/ whiche that thou sayderest here besom/ that werry ryght sharpe/ not onely that I am not agryen of hem nowe/ but I desyrous of hem: & se greatly to herry the remedyes. I han sayde she thus. That seied I wel (quod she) whan that thou ententyfe and fyxe/ raught herest my wordes: and I abode tyl thou hadeste fulle habyte of thy thought/ as thou hafte nowe/ or els tyl that I my selfe had maked it to ỹ same habyte/ whiche that is a more very thynge. And certes the remenante of thynges that ben yet to sey ben suche/ that first whan men taste hem/ they ben bytynge: But whan they ben retayned within a wight/ than ben they swete. But for thou sayest that thou art so desyrous to

to

is herken hem/with ho we great brenning wol-
dest thou glowen/if thou wystes whyder I
wolde leden the: B. Whider is that (qd I) P.
To thilke very blyssfulnesse (qd she) of which
thyn herte dremeth. But for as moche as thy
sight is occupyed & distourbed of erthly thyn-
ges/thou mayste not yet sene thilke selfe wele-
fulnesse. B. Do (qd I) and shewe me what
thilke very welfulnesse is/I pray the without
taryeng. P. That wol I gladly don (qd she)
for cause of the. But I wol first marken by
wordes/& I wyl enforcen me to enforme the
thilk false cause of blyssfulnesse/which þ thou
most vnoweste: so that whan thou haste behol-
den thilke false goodes/and turned thyn eyen
so to that other syde/thou maye vnowen the
derknesse of very blyssfulnesse.

Qui serere ingenuũ volet agrum/ Li-
berat aruã prius cruticibus/ Falce rubos/
vitemq; recidat.&c.

Ho so wol sowe a selde plenteous/let him
B. first delyueren it of thornes/and berue
a sonder with his hoke the busshes & the
sine/so that þ corne may comen heuy of eres
& of grenes. Hony is þ more swete it mouthes
haue first tasted sauours that be wyke. The
sterres shinen more agreably/whã the wynde
Aethus leteth his plungy blastes. And after
that Lucifer the day sterre hath chased away
the darke nyght/the daye the sayer leadeth the
rosen horse of the sonne. And right so thou/be
holdyng first the false goodes begyn to with-
drawe thy nerke fro the erthly affections/and
afterwardes the very goodes shullen entren
in to thy corage.

Tam dextro paululum vltu/et velut in
rigultãm sue mentis sedem recepta/sic ce-
pit. P. Omnis mortalium curã quã mul-
tiplicũ studiorũ labor exercet.&c.

Tho fastened she a lytel the syght of
her eyen/& she withdrewe herr/right
as it were in to þ strayte seete of her
thought: and beganne to speake right thus.
Al the cures (qd she) of mortal folke/whiche
that trauaylen hem in many manr studyes/
gone certes by dyuers wayes: but nathelesse
they enforcen hem al to comen onely to thenoe
of blyssfulnesse. And blissfulnesse is suche a
good/that who so hath goten it/he ne maye
ouer that thynge more desyre. And this thyng
forsoth is so souerayne good/that it conteyneth
in hym selfe al manr of goodes/to the whiche
good if there fayled any thynge/it might not
ben souerayn good. for than were some good
out of this souerayne good/that might be de-
syred. Nowe is it clere and certayne/that blis-
fulnesse is a parfyte state/by the congrega-
tion of al goodes/the whiche blyssfulnesse (as
I haue sayd) al mortal folke enforcen hem to
gette by dyuers wayes. For why/the couetyse
of euery good is naturelly planted in the her-
tes of men: but the myswandring errour/mis-
ledeth hem in to false goodes. Of the whiche
men/some of hem wenen that souerayn good
be to lyuen without nede of any thynge. And
other men demen/that souerayn good be right
digne of reuerence/and enforcen hem to be re-
uerenced amonge her neyghbours by the ho-
nours that they haue goten. And some folke
there ben that holden that right hye power be
souerayne good/and enforcen hem for to reig-
nen/or els to ioynen hem to hem that reygnen.
And it semeth to other folke/that nobleesse of
renome be the souerayn good/and hasten hem
to getten hem glorious name by the artes of
werre or of peace. And many folke mesuren
and gessen/that souerayne good be ioye and
gladnesse/and wenen that it be ryght blyssful
thing to plungen in Voluptuous delytes. And
there ben some folke/that entrechaungen the
causes and the endes of these forsayd goodes:
As they that desyren rychesses to haue power
and delytes/or els they desyre power for to
haue money/or for cause of renõme. In these
thynges and suche other is tourned al the en-
tencion of desyringes and werkes of men/as
thus: Nobleesse and sauoure of people/whi-
che that pereth to al men/as it semeth hem/
a manr clerenesse of renomme: and wyfe
and chyldren/that men desyren/for cause of
delyte and merynesse. But forsoth frendes ne

shulleth not be reteined amonge the goodes of fortune/but of vertue/for it is a ful holy maner thyng. Al these other thynges forsothe be taken for cause of power/or ells for cause of delyte. Certes now we am I redy to referren the goodes of the body/to these forsayd thynges abouen: for it semeth that strength and greatnesse of body yeuen power and worthynesse/ and that beaute and swytnesse yeuen glorie and renōme: and helth of body semeth to yeuen delyte. In al these thynges it semeth only that blysfulnesse is despred: for why/thylke thynge that euery man despreth moste ouer al thynges/he demeth that it be sourrayne good. But I haue diffined/that blisfulnesse is souerayn good/for which euery wight demeth that thilke astate that he despreth ouer al thynges/ that it be blisfulnesse. Now haste thou than before thyn eyen almost al the purposed forme of the welefulnesse of mankynde/ that is to sayne/richesse/honours/power/glorie and delytes/the whiche delite only conspired he Epicurus/ and iuged and establysshed that delyte is the sourrayne good: for as moche as al other thynges/ as him thought/byreste away hope and myrthe from the hert. But I returne agayne to the studyes of men/ of whiche men the corage alwaye reherseth and seketh the souerayne good/al be it so that it be with a dyrked memorie/ but he note by whiche pathe/ right as a dronken man note nought by which pathe he may retourne home to his house. Semeth it than that folke forleyen and erren to enforcen hem to haue nede of nothing. Certes there is none other thyng/that maye so moche performen blysfulnesse/as an estate plētrous of al goodes/ that ne hath nede of none other thyng/but that is suffysaunt of him selfe vnto him selfe. And solyen suche folke than þ wenen/that thilke thyng that is right good/ that it is eke right worthy of honour & of reuerēce: certes nay. For that thyng nys neyther soule ne worthy to be dysprysed/that wel nygh al the entencion of mortal folke trauayleth to get it. And power eke ought not to be reteined amōges goodes. What els: For it nis not to wene/ that thilke thynge that is moste worthy of al thynges be feble and without strength. And eeternesse of renome/ ought that to ben dysprysed: Certes ther may no man forsake/ that al thyng that is right excellent and noble/that it ne semeth be right clere and renomed. For certes it needeth not to say/ that blisfulnesse be anguisshous ne drery/ ne subiect to greuaunce ne sorowes/ sens that ay right lytel thynges folke seken to haue and to vsen that maye delyten hem. Certes these ben the thynges that men wysshen and desyren to geten: and for this cause despren they richesses/dignitees/ regnes/ glorie/ and delytes. For therby wenen they to haue suffysaunce/ honour/ power/renomme/ and gladnesse. Than is it good/ that men seen thus by so many dyuers studyes/ in whiche desyre it maye not lightly be shewed/how we great is the strength of nature. For how so men haue diuers sentences and discordynges/ algates men accorden al in louynge the ende of good.

Quantas rerum flectit habenas
Natura potens/quibus immensum
Legibus orbem prouida seruet/
Stringatq; ligās irresoluto
Singula nexu/ placet argumi
Fidelibus lentis promere cantu.xc.

IT lyketh me to shewe by subtyll songe with slacke & delytable/how of stryngi/how we that nature myghtily enclyneth and flytteth the gouernement of thinges/and by suche lawes she purueyable kepeth the great world/ and how she byndyng restrayneth al thynges by a bonde that may not be vnbounden. Al be it so that the lyons of the rountraye of Pene beren the sayre chaynes/and taken mattes of the handes of folke/ that yeuen it hem/ and dreden her sturdy maysters/ of whiche they be wonte to suffre beatynges/ if that her horrible mouthes ben bledde/that is to sayne/ of beestes deuoured: her corage of tyme passed that hath ben yore & rested repayreth ayen/ and they roren greuously/ and remembren on her nature/ and slaken her nerbes from her chaynes vnbounde/ and her maistre sursit to tome with blody tethe/assayeth þ woode wandres of hem/ that is to sayne/ they fretten her maistre.

maister. And the iangelyng birde that syngeth in the hye braunches/ that is to sayde/ in the wodde/ and after is enclosed in a streyte cage/ al though the playeng besynesse of men yeue hym honyed drauhtes/ and large meates with swete studye: yet natheles if thilke bryde soppyng out of her streyte cage/ seeth the agreable shadowes of ỳ woddes/ she defouleth with her fete her meate yshadde/ and selleth on mourning only the wodde/ and twytereth desyring the wodde with her swete wyse. The yerde of a tre that is haled adowne by mighty strength boweth redyly the croppe adowne: but if that the hande that is bente let it gone agayne/ anon the croppe loketh vpright to the heuen. The sonne Phebus that falleth at euen in the westren wawes/ retourneth ayen eftsones his route by a priuy pathe there as it is wonte a ryse. Al thinges seken ayen to her propre course/ and al thynges reioysen on her retournyng agayne to her nature: ne none ordynaunce is betaken to thynges/ but that hath ioyned the ende to the begynnynge/ and hath made the course it selfe stable/ that it chaunge not fro his proper fynde.

Vos quoq; o terrena animalia/ tenui licet imagine/ vestrũ tamen principium somnias. Uerumq; illũ beatitudinis finem/ licet minime perspicaci. &c.

CErtes also ye men that ben erthly beestes dreamen alway your begynnyng/ al though it be with a thynne ymagynacion/ and by a maner thought/ al be it not clerely ne perfitly/ ye lokyn from a ferre to thilke very fyne of blyssfulnesse. And therfore naturel entencion leadeth you to thilke very good/ but many maner errours misiourneth you therfro. Conspyder nowe if that be thilke thynges/ by which a mã weneth to get him blissfulnesse/ that he may comen to thilke ende/ that he weneth to come to by nature. For if that money/ honours/ or these other forsayde thinges bringe to men such a thing that no good ne fayle them ne semeth to fayle: Certes than wol I graunt that they be maked blissful by thinges that they haue goten. But if so be that thilke thinges ne mowen not performe that they byheten/ and that there be defaute of many goodes/ sheweth it not than clerely ỳ false beaute of blissfulnesse is knowen and atteynt in thilke thinges: First and forwarde thou thy self/ that haddest habundaunce of richesse not longe agon/ I asse the ỳ in thabundaunce of al thilke riches/ if thou were neuer anguissous or sorye in thy corage of any wronge or greuaunce/ that betyd the in any syde. B. Certes (qd I) it ne remembreth me not/ that euer I was so free of my thought/ that I ne was alwaye in anguisshe of somwhat. P. And was that not (qd she)/ or that the lacked somwhat that thou noldest not haue lacked: or els thou haddest that thou noldest haue had: B. Right so it is (qd I) P Than despreisest thou ỳ presence of ỳ one/ and thabsence of that other: B. I graunt wel (qd I) P. Forsothe (qd she) than nedeth ther somwhat that euery man despreth. B. Ye there nedeth (qd I) P. Certes (qd she) and he that hath lacke or nede of aught/ nys not in euery way sufficiaũt to him selfe. B. No (qd I) P. And thou (qd she) in al the plente of thy richesse haddest thilke lacke of sufficiaunce: B. What els (qd I) P. Than may not riches make hym that a man nys nedy/ ne that he be sufficient to him selfe: and yet that was it that they beheten as it semed. And eke certes I trowe that this be gretly to cõsyder/ that money hath not in his owne kynde/ that it ne may ben bynomed of hem that haue it maugre hem. B. I knowe it wel (qd I) P. Why shuldest ỳ not beknowen it (qd she) whan euery day ỳ strenger folke bynomen it from the febler maugre hem: For whence come els al these forayn cõplayntes/ quarels/ or pledynges/ but for that men asken her money that hath ben bynomed hem by strength or by gyle/ & alway maugre hem: B. Right so it is (qd I) P. Than hath a man nede (qd she) to seken him forayn helpe/ by which he may defende his money. B. Who may saye nay (qd I) P. Certes (qd she) and him neded none helpe/ if he ne had no money that he might lese. B. That is douteles (qd I) P. Than is this thyng turned in to ỳ cõtrary (qd she) for rychesse/ that men weneden shulde maken sufficiaunce/ they maken a man rather

hane nede of forayne helpe. Whiche is the maner or the gyse (qd̄ she) that richesse maye dooen away nede: Riche folke may they neither haue honger ne thurste: These riche men may they fele no colde on their lymes i wynter: but thou wylt answere ꝑ riche men haue ynough/ wher with they may stanchen her honger/ and slaken her thurst/ & done awaye colde. In this wyse may nede ben comforted ꝑ rychesse/ but certes nede ne maye not al vtterly be done away. For if this nede that alway is gapynge and gredy / be fulfylled with richesse and any other thing/ yet dwelleth thay a nede that mote be fulfylled. I holde me styl/ and tel not how that sykel thing suffyseth to nature: but certes to auarice suffyseth not ynough of nothynge. For syn that richesse ne may not al don away nede/ and they maken their owne nede/ what maye it thay be / that ye wenen that richesses mowen peuen pou suffysaunce?

Quamuis fluente dives auri gurgite
Non expleturas cogat auarus opes. &c.

Al were it so/ ꝑ a noble couetous man had a ryuer or a gutter fletynge al of golde/ yet shulde it neuer stanche his couetyse: and al though he had his necke charged with precious stones of the reed see: & though he dooere his feldes pleteous with an hundred oxen/ neuer ne shal his ryting besynes forleten him whyle he lyueth/ ne the lyght rychesses ne shal not bearen him companye whan he is deed.

Sed dignitates honorabilem/ reuerendūq/ cui prouenerint/ reddunt. Num vis ea est magistratibus/ vt vtentū mentibus virtutes inserant/ vicia depellant? &c.

But dignytees to whom they be comen/ maken they him honourable and reuerent? haue they not so great strēgth that they may putten vertue in hertes of folkes/ ꝑ vsen the lordship of hem/ or els may they don away the vyces. Certes they be not wonte to done away wickednesse/ but they be wonte rather to shewe wickednesse. And therof cometh it that I haue right gret disdayn / that dignitees ben peuen to wicked men. For whiche thyng Tullius cleped a cōsul of Rome (that highte Lentulus) postome of bothe/ as who saith/ he cleped him a congregacion of vyces in his brest/ as a postome is ful of corrupcion: al were Nonius set in a chayre of dignite. Sersi thou not thay/ howe great vylonies dignitees doon to wicked men? certes vnworthynesse of wicked men shulde be the lasse sene/ if they were nomed of none honour. Certes thou thy self ne mightest not be brought with as many perils as thou mightest suffre/ that thou woldest beare the magistrate with decorate/ that is to sayne/ that for peryl that might befal the by offence of the kynge Theodrike/ thou noldest not be felawe in gouernaunce with Decorate/ whan thou sawe that he had wicked corage of a sprouous shrewe and of an accusour. Ne I may not for such honours rugen hem worthy of reuerēce/ that I deme and holde vnworthy to haue thilke same honours. Nowe if thou sawe a man that were fulfylde of wysdome/ certes thou ne mightest not deme that he were vnworthy to ꝑ honour/ or els to the wysdom of whiche he is fulfylled. B. No (quod I) P. Certes (qd̄ she) dignitees aperteynen properly to vertue/ and vertue transporteth dignite anon to thylke man / to whiche she her self is conioyned. And for as moche as honours of people ne maye not make folke digne of honour/ it is wel sene clerly/ that they ne haue no propre beautie or dignyte. And yet men oughten take more hede in this: for if a wight be in so moche the more outcast / that he is dispysed of moste folke/ so as dignyte ne may not maken shrewes worthy of no reuerence/ than meteth dignite shrewes rather dispysed thā punysed/ the whiche shrewes dignite shewth to more folke. And forsothe not vnpunisshed/ that is to sayne/ that shrewes reuengen hem ouerwarde vpon dignitees. For they yelden ayen to dignitees as gret guerdons/ whan they dispotten & defoulen dignitees with her vilonye. And for as moch as thou nowe knowest/ that thilke very reuerence ne maye not comen by these shadowy transytorie dignitees/ vnderstonde nowe thus: that if a man had vsed and had many maner dignitees of consuls/ & were

pera-

peraduenture comen among straunge nacions/ shulde thilke honour maken hym worshypful and redoutrd of straunge folke: Certes if that honour of people were a naturel peste to dignites/ it ne might neuer cessen no wher amog ne manere folke to done his office. Right as a fyr in euery countrey ne stynteth not to enchaufen & maken hote. But for as moche as for to ben honourable or reuerent/ ne cometh nat to folke of her propre strength of nature/ but onely of the false opinion of folke/ that is to sayne/ that weneth þ dignitees maken folke digne of honours: anon therfore whan they comen ther as folke ne vnderstonden not thilke dignites/ her honours vanisshen away and that anon. But þ is among straunge folke mayst thou sayne. Ne amonges hem there they were borne/ ne durede not thilke dignitees alwaye. Certes the dignite of the prouostry of Rome was whilom a great power: nowe is it nothyng but an idle name/ and the rente of the senatour a great charge. And if a wight whylom had thoffice to taken hede to the vitayles of the people/ as of corne and of other thyng/ he was holden amóges hem great. But what thyng is more nowe outcast than thilke prouostre. As I haue sayd a lytel here before/ that thilke thing that hath no propre beaute of it selfe/ receyueth somtyme pure & shynynge/ and somtyme leseth it by thopynion of vsaunce. Nowe if that dignitees than ne mowe not make folke digne of reuerence/ & if that dignites wexe foule of her wyl/ by þ sylthe of shrewes. And if dignytees lesen her shynynge by chaungyng of tymes/ & if they wexen foule by fourmacion of people/ what is it that they han in hem selfe of beaute/ þ ought to be desyred: as who sayth/ none: than ne mowen they pesen no beaute of dignite to none other.

Quamuis se tyrio superbus ostro Commerit et niueis lapillis. &c.

ALbeit so/ that the proude Nero with al his wode luxurie/ kembe hym and apparelled hym with fayre purpure of Tyre/ and with whyte perles. Algates yet therof he hateful to al folke/ this is to say that al was he beheted of al folkes/ yet this wicked Nero had great lordshyppe. And yaf whylom to the reuerent Senatours the vnworshipful seates of dignytees. Vnworshipful seates he clepeth here/ for that Nero that was so wicked yaue the dignytees.

Who wolde than resonably weneu/ that blysfulnesse were in suche honours/ as ben yeuen by vycious shrewes.

In vero regna/ regumq; familiaritas efficere potentem valent? Quidni? &c.

BVt reignes and familyarites of kynges/ maye they maken a man to bene myghty? Howe els? Whan his blysfulnesse dureth perpetually. But certes the olde age of tyme passed/ and eke of present tyme nowe/ is ful of ensamples/ howe that kynges haue chaunged in to wretchednesse/ out of her welfulnesse. O/ a noble thyng and a clere thynge is power/ that nys nat founden myghty to kepe it selfe. And if that power of realmes be authour & maker of blysfulnesse/ if thilke power lacketh on any syde/ amenuseth it nat thilke blysfulnesse/ and bryngeth in wretchednesse: But yet al be it so/ that the realmes of manyde stretchen brode/ yet mote there nede ben moche folke/ ouer which that euery kyng ne hath no lordshyppe ne cómaundement. And certes vpon thilke syde that power falleth/ whiche that maketh folke blysful. Right on that same syde no power entreth vndueth that maketh hem wretches. In this maner than moten kynges haue more portioun of wretchednesse than of welefulnesse.

A tyraunt that was kynge of Cecyle/ that had assayed the peryl of his estate/ shewed by symilytude the drede of realmes by gastnesse of a swerde/ that honge ouer the heed of his famyler. What thynge is than this power/ that maye nat done awaye the bytynges of besynesse/ ne eschewe the prickes of drede?

And certes yet wolden they lyuen in syckernesse/ but they maye nat. And yet they glosyfien hem in her power. Holdest thou than that thilke man be mighty/ þ thou seest that he wolde done that he may nat done? And holdest thou

deſt thou than him a myghtie man/ that hath enuyroned his ſydes with men of armes or ſergeaũtes/ and dredeth more hem that he maketh agaſt/ than they dreden hym/ and that is putte in the handes of his ſeruauntes/ for he ſhulde ſeme myghtye? But of ſamplyers or ſeruauntes of ỹnges/ why ſhulde I tel the any thyng/ ſithe that I my ſelfe haue ſhewed the/ that realmes hem ſelfe ben ful of great febleſſe: The whiche ſamplyers certes the royal power of ỹnges in hoole eſtate and in eſtate abated/ ful oftē throweth adowne.

Nero conſtrayned Seneke his ſamplyer and his mayſter/ to cheſen on what dethe he wolde dye. Antonius cõmaunded ỹ ỹnyghtes ſlowen with her ſwordes Papinian his ſamplyer/ whiche Papinyan hadde ben longtyme ful mighty amonges hem of the courte. and yet certes they wolden bothe haue renoũced her power. Of whiche two Seneke enforced him to yeuen to Nero his ryches ſe/ and alſo to haue gone in to ſolytarye exyle. But whan the great weight/ that is to ſayn/ of fortunes power or of Fortune/ draweth hem that ſhulden fal/ neither of hem ne myght do that he wolde. What thyng is than thylke power/ that though men haue it/ yet they ben agaſte/ & whan thou woldeſt haue it/ thou nartē nat ſyker? And if thou woldeſt forleten it/ thou mayſt nat eſchewen it. But wheder ſuch men ben frendes at nede/ as ben coũſayled by fortune/ and nat by Vertue? Certes ſuche ſolde as welful fortune maketh frēdes/ cõtrarious fortune maketh hem enemyes. And what peſtylence is more myghty for to anoy a wight/ than a ſamplyer enemy?

Qui ſe volet eſſe potēt̃/ Animos domet ille feroces: Nec victa libidine colla. ꝛc.

Who ſo wol be myghty/ he mote daũtey his cruel corages/ ne putte nat his necke ouercomen/ vnder ỹ foule raynes of lechery. For al be it ſo/ that the lordſhyppe ſtrecche ſo ferre/ that the countrey of Inde quaketh at thy cõmaundementes/ or at thy lawes. And that the laſt ple in the ſee/ that hight Tyle/ be thrale to thee: yet if thou mayſt nat putten away thy foule derke deſpytes/ and dryuen out fro the/ wrecched complayntes: Certes it nys no power that thou haſte.

Gloria vero q̃ fallax ſcept/ q̃ turpis eſt/ Vnde non iniuria tragicus exclamat. O gloria gloria multibus mortalium nihil aliud facta/ nili auriũ inflatio magna. ꝛc.

But glory/ how we diſceyuable and how foule is it ofte? For whiche thyng/ nat ſykfully a tragedyen/ that is to ſayne a maker of dytees that highten tragedies/ cryed and ſayd. O glory glory (q̃d he) thou nart no thynge elſe to thouſandes of folkes/ but a ſweller of eares. For many haue ful great renome by the falſe opynyon of the people.

And what thynge may ben thought fouler than ſuche prayſynge? For thylke folke that ben prayſed falſely/ they mooten nedes haue ſhame of her prayſynges. And if that folke haue getten hem thanke or prayſynge by her deſertes: What thynge hath thylke prayſe eched or encreaſed to the conſcyence of wyſe folke/ that meaſuren her good/ nat by the rumour of the people/ but by the ſothfaſtneſſe of conſcyence? And if it ſeme a fayre thyng/ a man to haue encreaſed and ſpradd his name/ than foloweth it/ ỹ it is demed to ben a foule thyng if it ne be yſpradde and encreaſed. But as I ſayd a lytel here before/ that ſith ther moten nedes ben many folkes/ to whiche folke the renome of a man ne maye nat comen/ it befalleth/ that he that thou weneſt be glorious and renomed/ ſemeth in the neyt parte of therthe/ to ben without glorye and without renome. And certes amõges theſe thynges I ne trowe nat that the prayſe and the grace of the people/ nys neither worthy to ben remembred/ ne cometh of wyſe iugemẽt/ ne is ferm: pdurably. But nowe of this name of gentyleſſe: what may is it that ne may wel ſeme how we ſoyne & how we flyttig it is? For if ỹ name of gētyleſſe be referred to renome & clereneſſe of lynage/ than is gentyl name but a foraȝ thyng/ ỹ is to ſay/ to hem ỹ glouſien hem of her lynage. For it ſemeth ỹ gentyles be a maner prayſig/

that

that cometh of the deserte of auncestres. And if praysynge maketh gentylesse/ than moten they nedes ben gentyl/ that ben praysed. For whiche thynge it folowerth/ that if thou ne hast no gentylnesse of thy selfe/ that is ta sayne ryse/ that cometh of thy deserte. For ayn gentylesse ne maketh the nat gentyl. But certes if there be any good in gentyllesse/ I trowe it be al onely this: that it semeth as that a maner necessyte be imposed to gentylmen/ for that they ne shulde nat outragen or forleauen ryo the vertues of her noble auncestres.

Omne hominū genus in terris Similiter surgit ad ortu. Unus eni rerum pater est/ Unus cuncta ministrat. &c.

ALl the lynage of men/ that ben in erthe ben of semblable byrthe. One alone is fayser of thynges: one alone enlumineth al thynges: he yaue to the sonne his beames: he yaue to the moone her hornes: he yaue to men the erthe: he yaue the fierres to the heuen: he enclosed with membres the soules that comen from his hye seate. Thay comen al mortal folke of noble seed. Why noysen ye or bosten of youre eldres: For if ye loke youre begynnig and god youre father authour and youre maker/ Thay nys there no forlyued wyght or ungentyl/ but if he nourysshe his corage vnto vyces/ and forlete his proper byrthe.

Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar? quarum appetentia quidem plena est anxietatis. &c.

BVt what shal I sayne of delyces of body/ of whiche delices the desyrynges ben ful of anguisshes/ and the fulfyllinges of hem ben ful of penaunce? How great sickenesses and how great sorowes vnsuffrable/ right as a maner fruite of wickednesse ben thilke delyces wonte to bringen to the bodies of folkes that vsen hem? of whiche delyces I not what ryse may ben had of her mouynge. But this wote I wel/ that who so euer wol remembren hym of his luxures/ he shal wel vnderstonde/ that the issues of delyces ben sorowful & sorye. And if thilke delyces mowe maken folke blissful/ than by ỳ same cause moten these beestes ben cleped blyssful. of whiche beestes al the entencion hasteth to fulfyl her bodely volyte. And the gladnesse of wyse and children were an honeste thyng/ but it hath ben said that it is ouermoch ayenst kynde/ that children haue ben founden tourmentours to her fathers/ I not howe many. Of whiche children howe byting is euery cõdycion/ it nedeth not to telleu it the/ that haste er this tyme assayed it/ and arte yet nowe anguisshous. In this tyme aproue I ỳ sentẽce of my disciple Euripides/ ỳ sayd/ that he ỳ hath no children is welefol by infortune.

Habet hoc voluptas omnis Stimulis agit frementes/ Ipsumq; par volantium Vbi grata mella cudit/ Fugit/ et nimis tenaci Ferit icta corda morsu. &c.

EVery delite hath this/ that it anguisseth hem with pickes that vsen it. It resembleth to these fleyng flyes that we clepen bees/ that after that he hath shedde his agreable honyes/ he flyeth away/ and stingeth the hertes of hem that ben smytten with vntynge ouerlonge holden.

Nihil igitur dubium est/ quin he ad beatitudinem vie deuia quedam sint: nec ỳ ducere eos quemq; valeant. &c.

NOwe is it no doute than/ that these wayes ne ben a maner mysleding to blyssfulnesse: ne that they ne mowen nat leaden folke thider/ as they behetem to leden hem. But with howe great harmes these forsayde wayes ben enlaced/ I shal shewe you shortly. For why/ if thou enforcest the to assẽble money/ thou must byreuen hym his money that hath it. And if thou wolte shynen with dignitees/ thou muste besechen and supplyen hem/ that yeuen tho dignytees. And if thou coueytest by honour to gone before other folkes/ thou shalte defoule thy self thorowe humblesse of asking. If thou despyest power/ thou shalt by awaytes of thy subiects anoyously be cast vnder by many paryls. Arrest thou glorye?

thou

thou shalte ben so distracte by aspre thynges/ that thou shalt forgone sikernesse. And if thou woldest leden thy lyfe in delytes/ euery wight shal dispysen the and forleten the/ as thou that arte thral to thyng/ that is right foule and vntel/ that is to sayne/ seruaunt to thy bodye. Nowe is it than wel ysene/ howe lytel & howe vntel possession they coueyten/ that putten the goodes of the body aboue her owne reason. For mayste thou surmounten these olyfauntes in greatnesse or in weight of body: or mayste thou be strenger than the bul: mayste thou be swyfter than the tygre: Beholde the spaces & the stablenesse/ and the swyfte course of heuen/ and stynte somtyme to wondren on soule thynges. The whiche heuen certes ought not rather for these thynges to be wondred vpon/ than for the reason vp whiche it is gouerned. But the shynynge of thy forme/ that is to sayne/ the beaute of thy body/ how swyftly passyng is it/ and howe transytorie/ certes it is more slyttyng than ỳ mutabylite of flowres of the sõmer season. For so as Aristotel telleth/ that if ỳ men had eyen of a beest that hight Lyny/ so that the lokyng of sothe myght preeren through tho thynges that withstonden it. Who so loked than in thentrayles of the body of Alcibiades/ that was ful fayre in the superficie without/ it shulde seme right foule. And for thy/ if thou semest fayre/ thy nature ne maketh nat that/ but the disceyuaunce of feblenesse of the eyen that loken. But prayse the goodes of the body as moche as euer the lyst/ so that thou knowe al gatz that what so it be/ that is to sayne/ of the goodes of the bodye/ whiche that thou wondrest vpon/ maye ben distroyed or elles dissolued by the heete of a feuer of thre dayes. Of whiche forsayd thynges I may reducen this shortly in a sõme/ that these worldly goodes/ whiche that ne mowen neuer that they behyghten/ ne ben not parfyte by the congregacion of al goodes/ that they ne ben not wayes ne pathes that bringen men to blisfulnesse/ ne maken men to be blisful.

Heu heu q̃ miseros tramite deuios Abducit ignorantia: Non autum in viridi quæritis arbore. ꝛc.

Alas/ whiche sorye/ and whiche ignorannce misledeth wandring wrecches fro the pathe of very good. Certes ye seken no golde in grene trees/ ne ye gadren nat precious stõnes in vynes: ne ye ne hyden not your gynnes in hye mountaynes to catchen fysshe: of the whiche ye maye maken riche festes.

And if you lyste to hunte to Roes/ ye ne gon nat to the fordes of the water that hight Thyrene. And ouer this men knowe wel the creekes and the cauernes of the see yhid in the flodes/ and knowen eke whiche water is moost plenteous of whyte perles/ & knowen whiche water habounded most of reed purpure/ that is to sayne/ of a maner shelfysh/ with whiche men dyen purpure: and knowen whiche fordes habounden moste of tendre fysshes/ or of sharpe fysshes/ ỳ hight Echynes. But sothe suffren hem selfe to ben so blynde/ that hem ne retchen not to knowe where thilke goodes ben yhyde/ whiche that they coueyten/ but plungen hem in erthe/ and seken there thilke good/ that surmounteth the heuen that beareth the sterres. What prayer maye I maken that be digne to the myre thoughtes of men? But I pray that they coueyten richesse and honours/ so that whan they haue goten tho falsse goodes with great trauayle that therby they mowen knowen the very goodes.

Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse sufficerit/ q̃ si perspicacius intuearis/ ordo est deinceps. ꝛc.

It suffyseth that I haue sayde hyderto/ the forme of falsse welefulnesse: so that if thou looke nowe clerely: the order of myne entention requyreth from hens forthe/ to shewen the very welefulnesse. B. For soth (q̃d I) I se wel nowe/ ỳ suffysaunce may nat ben men vp richesse/ ne power by realmes/ ne reuerence by dignytees/ ne gentylesse by glory/ ne ioye by delyces. Phi. And hastie thou wel knowen the causes (q̃d she) why it is? Boe. Certes me semeth (q̃d I) that I se hem right as though it were through a spiel clyste: But me were leuer knowen hem more openly of the. P. Certes (q̃d she) the reason is al redy.

For thilke

In thilke thynge that symply is one thynge without any deuysion/ the errour and spite of mankynde deuydeth and departeth it & maketh it & transporteth from very & parfyte good to goodes that be false & vnparfyt. But say me this: wenest thou that he that hath nede of power/ þ hym ne lacketh nothyng? B. Nay (qõ I) P. Certes (qõ she) thou sayest aryght: for yf so be that there is a thynge that in any parte be feblet of power/ certes as in that it hath nede of forayn helpe. B. Right hat is (qõ I) Phi. Suffysaunce and power ben of one ryndc. Boece. So semeth (qõ I) Phylo. And demest thou (quod she) that a thynge that is of this maner/ that is to saye/ suffysaunt and mygthy/ ought ben despysed: or els that it be right digne of reuerence aboue al thynges? B. Certes (qõ I) it is no doute that it is right worthy to be reuerenced. P. Let vs adden (qõ she) reuerence to suffysaunce and to power/ so that we demen þ these thynges be al one thinge. B. Certes (qõ I) let vs adden it yf we wyl graunt the sothe. P. What demest thou (qõ she) thã is that a verye thing and not noble/ that is suffysaunt/ reuerent/ and mighty? or els that it is right noble and right dere by celebrate of renõme? Consydere than (qõ she) as we haue graunted here byforne/ that he that ne hath no nede of no thyng/ & is moste mighty and moste digne of honour/ if hym nedeth any clerenesse of renome/ whiche clerenesse he might not graunten of hym selfe: by miracle of thilke clerenesse he might semen be fouler on any syde/ or the more out caste. Boece. That is to say/ naye: for who so that is suffysaunt/ mighty/ and reuerent/ clerenesse of renome folweth of the forsayde thinges: he hath it al redy of his suffysaunce. Boece. I maye not (quod I) denye it/ but I mote graunten as it is/ that thes thynge is right ensuable by clerenesse of renõme and noblesse. Phi. Than folweth (quod she) that we adden clerenesse of renomme to the forsayde thynges/ so that there be amonges hem no differaunce. Boece. Thus is a consequence (qõ I) Phylo. This thynge than (quod she) that ne hath nede of no forayne thynge/ and that maye do al thynge by his strengthes/ and that is noble and hono urable/ is it not a merry thynge and ioyful? Boe. But whence (quod I) that any foro we might come to thes thyng that is suche/ certes I may not thenke. Philoso. Than mote we graunten (qõ she) that this thynge be ful of gladnesse/ yf the forsayde thynges be sothe. And certes/ also mote we graunten/ that suffysaunce/ power/ noblesse/ reuerence/ and gladnesse be onely dyuers by names/ but her substaunce hath no dyuersyte. Boece. It mote nedely be so (quod I) Philosophia. Thylke thynge than (quod she) that is one and symple in his nature/ the wickednesse of men departeth and deuydeth it: And whan they enforcen hem to getten partye of a thynge/ that ne hath no parte/ they ne geten hem neyther thylke partie that nys none/ ne the thynge al hole that they despise. Boece. In whiche manere (quod I) Philosophia. Thylke man (quod she) that fyeth rychesse to slyen poueryte: he ne transayleth hym not fro: to get power/ for he hath leauer be dede and byle/ and eke withdraweth from hym sadde many naturel delytes/ for he nolde lese the money that he hath assembled. Lut certes in this maner he ne getteth hym no suffysaunce/ that power forleteth and that noblesse pursueth/ and that shame maketh outcaste/ and that derkenesse hydeth. And certes he that despyseth onely power/ wasteth and scatereth rychesse/ and desyreth delytes and eke honour þ is without power/ ne he ne prayseth glorie nothyng. Certes this seest thou wel that many thinges faylen to him: for he hath somtyme defaute of many necessytes/ & many angwyssches byten hym. And whan he may not done tho defautes away/ he foleeth to be mighty/ and that is the thyng that he most despyseth. And right thus maye I make semblable reasons of honour/ of glorie/ & of delytes. For so euery of these forsaid thinges is þ same that these other thinges ben/ that is to sayne/ al one thyng. Who so euer serueth to geten that one of these & not þ other/ he ne geteth not that he desyreth. B. What sayest þ thã/ yf that a man ne neyte to geten al these thyngs togyder. P. Certes (qõ she) I wold say þ he wolde get hym souerayn suffysaunce/ but þ shal he not synde in tho

thynges

thynges that I haue shewed/ that nowe not penen they beheten. B. Certes no (qd I) Phi. Than (quod she) ne shullen men not by no way seken blissfulnesse in suche thynges as men wenen that they ne nowe gyuen but one thynge syngulerly of al that men seken. Doc. I graūt wel (qd I) ne non sother thyng may be sayd. Phi. Nowe haste thou than (qd she) the forme and the cause of false welefulnesse: Nowe turne and flytte agayn to thy thought/ for there shal thou sene anon thilke very blysfulnesse/ that I haue behyght the. B. Certes (quod I) it is clere and open/ though it were to a blynde man: And that shewest thou me a syker here before/ whan thou enforcedest the to shewe me ꝑ causes of the false welefulnesse. For (but if I be begiled) than is ꝑ thilke very blysfulnesse and parfyte/ that parfytely maketh a man suffysaunt/ mighty/ honourable/ noble/ and ful of gladnes. And for thou shalt wel knowe/ that I haue wel vnderstanden these thynges within my herte: I knowe wel that thilke blysfulnesse that men verily penen one of the forsayd thynges/ sens they ben al one: I knowe doutlesse that thylke thyng is ful of blysfulnesse. P. O my norice (qd she) by this opinyon I say that thou arte blysful/ if thou put this therto that I shal sayne. B. What is that (qd I). P. Trowest thou that there be any thyng in this erthely mortal tomblynge thynges/ that maye bringen this estate: Do. Certes (qd I) I trowe it not: and thou haste shewed me wel/ that ouer thilke good ther nys nothyng more to ben desyred. P. These thinges than (qd she) that is to sayne/ erthly suffisaunce & power/ and suche thinges erthly/ they semen syknesse of very good/ or elles it semeth that they penen to mortal folke a maner of goodnesse/ that ne be not parfyte: but thylke good that is very and parfyte/ that may they not penen. D. I accorde me wel (qd I). P. Than (qd she) for as moch as thou hast knowen/ which is thilke very blissfulnes/ & eke which thilke thinges ben/ ꝑ lyen falsely blissfulnes/ that is to say/ that they by discrete semen very goodes: Nowe behoueth ꝑ to knowe whēce & wher thou mowe seke thilke very blissfulnesse. D. Certes (qd I) ꝑ desyre I gretly/ & haue abyden longe tyme to herken it. P. But for as moche (qd she) as it sytteth to my desyre Plato in his boke of Thimeo/ that in tyght lytel thynges mennes shulden beseche the helpe of god: What trowest thou ꝑ we nowe to done so that we maye deserue to fynde the state of thylke soueraygne god? D. Certes (qd I) I deme ꝑ we shullen clepe to the father of al goddes/ for withouten him nys ther nothyng fonded a right. P. Thou sayest a right (qd she) and began anon to syngen right thus.

O qui perpetua mundū ratiōe gubernas
Terrarū/ celiq; sator/ qui tēpus ab euo
Ire iubes/ stabilisq; manens das cuncta
mouēri. Quem non externe pepulerunt
fingere cause. &c.

O Thou father/ soueraygne and creatour of heuen and of erthes/ that governest this worlde by pardurable reason/ that commaundest the tymes to gone/ syth that age hath begynnyng. Thou that dwellest thy self ay stedfast and stable/ and penest al other thynges to be meued/ ne foreyne causes ne essoyen the neuer to compoun werke of flotteryng matter/ but onely the forme of soueraygne good presette within the without envy/ that meued the freely. Thou that arte aboue sayed/ bearyng the sayre worlde in thy thought: formedest this worlde to thy semblaunce semblable/ of ꝑ sayre worlde in thy thought. Thou drawest al thilke on thy soueraygne ensampler/ and commaundest that this worlde parfitely ymaked/ haue freely and absolute his perfite parties. Thou byndest the elementes by nombres proporcionables/ that the colde thynges mowen accorden with the hote thynges/ and the drye thinges with the moyste: That the fyre/ that is purest ne slyde nat ouerthye/ ne that the heuynesse ne drawe nat aboun ouerlowe the erthes that be plonged in the waters. Thou knyttest togyder/ the meane soule of treble fynde meanyng al thynges/ & deuydest it by meuers accordyng. And whan it is thus deuyded/ it hath affermedde a mouynge in to rounden/ it gooth to turne agayne to him selfe/ and enuyrouneth a ful depe thought/ and turneth the heuen by

semblable

semblable ymage. Thou by euery lyke causes auaunceste the soules and the lesse lyues/ and enforcyng hem to heyght by syght wayes or cartes. Thou soweste hem in to heuen and in to erthe/ and whan they be conuerted to the by thy bounte (a we) thou makeste hem retourne ayen to the by ayen lokyng yue. O father yeue thou to ỹ thought to styen vp in to thy strayte sete/ and graunt hem to enuyronne the well of good. And the syght ysounde graunt hym to fyxen the clere syghtes of his corage in the: and scatter thou and tobreake the weyghtes & the cloudes of erthely heuynesse/ and shyne thou by thy bughtnesse. For thou arte clerenesse/ thou arte pesyble reste to debonayre folke/ thou thy self arte begynnyng/ bearer/ leder/ pathe/ and ende to lede on the that is our ende.

Quoniã igit/ ḧ sit imperfecti/ que etiam p.fecti dom̃ forma uidit/ nunc demonstrandum reor.

HOr asmoche thã/ as thou hast sene whyche is the fourme of good/ that nys not parfyte/ and the fourme of good/ whyche ỹ is pfyte. Now we trowe I that it were good to shewe in what this perfection of blissfulnesse is set. And i this thyng I trow that we shal first enquire for to weten/ if that any suche maner good as thilke good as thou haste dessymulled a lytel here beforne/ that is to sayne/ sourrayne good/ maye be founde in the nature of thyngi. For that vayne ymaginacion of thought ne deceyue vs not/ and put vs out of the sothfastnesse of thilke thing that is subsumpted to vs. But it may not be denyed that thylke ne is/ and that is right as a well of al goodes. For al thyng that is cleped imparfite is proued imparfyte/ by the amenusing of perfection of thyng that is parfyte. And herof cometh it that in euery thinge general/ if that men sene any thyng that is imparfyte/ certes in thilke thynge general/ there mote be some thynge that is parfyte. For if so be that perfection is don away/ men may not thilke ne say from whence thilke thyng is/ ỹ is cleped imparfyte. For ỹ nature ne toke not her begynnyng of thynges amenused and imparfyte/ but it procedeth of thinges that ben al hole absolute/ and descendeth so down in to the vttreste thynges/ and in to thynges empty & without frute. But as I haue shewed a lytel here beforne/ that if that there be a blissfulnesse that be freel and vayne/ & imparfyte/ there maye no man doute that there nys some blyssfulnesse/ that there is sadde stedfaste and parfyte. B. This is concluded (qõ I) fermely and sothfastly. P. But consyder also (qõ she) in whom this blissfulnesse inhabyteth. The comune acorde and conceyte of the corage of men proueth and graunteth/ that god prince of al thynges is good. For so as nothing may be thought better than good/ it may not be douted than ỹ he that no thyng nys better than he nys good. Certes reason sheweth that god is so good/ that it proueth by very force/ that pfyte good is in him. For if god nys such he ne may not ben prince of al thyng. For certes sothfyng possessyng in it self parfyte good/ shulde be more worthy than god: and it should semen that thilke thing were furste and older than god. For we haue shewed appertly/ that al thinges that ben parfyte/ ben furste/ or thynges that ben imperfyte. And for thy/ for as moche as that my reason or my processe ne go not awaye without ende/ we owen to graunten/ that the sourrayn good is right ful of sourrayne parfyte good. And we haue estaublyssshed/ that the sourrayne good is very blissfulnesse: than mote it nedes be/ that very blyssfulnesse is sette in sourrayne good. B. This take I wel (qõ I) ne this ne may not be withsayd in no maner. P. But I praye the (qõ she) se nowe how thou mayste prouen holily/ and withouten corruption/ this that we haue sayde/ that the sourrayne god is ful of right sourrayne good. B. In whiche maner (qõ I) P. Wenest thou aught (qõ she) that the father of al thynges hath taken thilke sourrayne good any where out of him selfe? Of whiche sourrayn good/ men proueth that he is ful. Right as thou mightest thynken/ that god/ that hath blyssfulnesse in hym selfe/ and thylke blyssfulnesse that is in him were dyuers in substaunce. For if thou wene/ that god hath receyued thilke good out of hym selfe/ thou mayste wene/ that he ỹ yaue thilke good

to god be more worthy than god. But I am
beknowe and cõfesse/ and that right dignely/
that god is right worthy aboue al thynges:
And if so be that this good be in hym by na-
ture/ but that is dyuers from hym by weiyng
reason/ sens we spekan of god prince of al thi-
ges. Sayne who so sayne maye/ who was he
that conioyned these thynges to gyther. And
eke at the laste se wel/ that a thyng that is dy-
uers fro any thyng/ that thilke thyng nys not
that same thynge/ for whiche it is vnderstond-
den to ben dyuers. Than soloweth it wel/ that
thilke thing that by his nature is dyuers from
souerayne good/ that thynge is not souerayne
good. But certes it were a felonous cursed-
nesse to thynken that of hym that nothynge
nys more worthe. For alwaye of al thynges
the name of hem, ne maye not ben better than
her begynner. For whiche I maye concluden
by right very reason/ that thilke that is bes
gynnyng of al thynges/ thilke same thynge is
souerayn god in his substance. B. Thou hast
sayde righfully (quod I) Philoso. But we
haue graunted (quod she) that the souerayne
good is blyssfulnesse. Boece. That is sothe
(qd I) Philoso. Than (quod she) we moten
nedes granten and confessen that thilke same
souerayn good be god. Boece. Certes (qd I)
I ne maye not denye ne withstande the rea-
sons purposed/ and I se wel that it soloweth
by strength of the premisses. Ph. Loke nowe
(quod she) if this be proued yet more fermely
thus/ that there ne mowen not ben to soue-
rayne goodes that ben dyuers amonge hem
selfe. For certes the goodes that ben dyuers
amonge hem selfe/ that one is not that the o-
ther is. Than ne mowen neyther of hem be
parfyte/ so as eyther of hem lacketh to other/
but that that nys not parfyte/ men maye sene
apertly that it nys not souerayne. The thyn-
ges than that be souerainly good/ ne mowen
by no waye be dyuers. But I haue wel con-
cluded/ that blyssfulnesse and god ben the so-
uerayne good/ for whiche it mote nedes ben
that souerayne blyssfulnesse is souerayne dig-
nyte. Boece. Nothynge (qd I) is more soth-
fastе than this/ ne more ferme by reason/ ne a
more worthy thynge than god maye not be
concluded. Philosophie. Vpon these thynges
than (quod she) right as these geometriens
whan they haue shewed their proposycions/
ben wonte to bringen in thynges that they ne-
den por:isme or declaracions of forsayde
thynges/ right so wol I yeue the here as a
corallarye or a mede of Crowne. For why/
for as moche as by the gettyng of blissfulnesse
men ben maked blyssful/ and blyssfulnesse is
dignyte. Than it is manyfest and open/ that
by the gettynge of dignyte men ben maked
blissful/ right as by the gettynge of iustyce.
And by the gettynge of sapyence they be ma-
ked wyse/ right so nedes by the semblable rea-
son/ whan they haue goten diuynite they be
made goddes. Than is euery blissful man a
god. But certes by nature there nys but one
god/ but by the partycipacion of the diuynite
there ne letteth ne distourbeth nothynge/ that
there ne be many goddes. Boece. This is
(quod I) a fayre thynge and a precious/ clepe
it as thou wylt/ be it Corallorie or porrisme/
or mede of crowne/ or declarynge. Philoso.
Certes (quod she) no thynge nys fayrer than
is the thynge that by reason shulde be added
to these forsayde thynges. Boece. What thing
(quod I) Philoso. So (quod she) as it se-
meth that blyssfulnesse cõtayneth many thyn-
ges/ it were for to weten whether that al these
thynges maken or conioynen as a maner bo-
dye of blyssfulnesse/ by the diuersyte of par-
ties of membres/ or els if any of al these thin-
ges be suche that it accomplysshe by hym sel-
fe the substaunce of blyssfulnesse. So al these o-
ther thynges ben referred and brought to blis-
fulnesse/ that is to say/ as to the chefe of hem.
Boece. I wolde (quod I) that thou madest
me clerely to vnderstande what thou sayest/
and what thou recordest me the forsayd thyn-
Philosophia. Haue I not iuged (quod she)
that blyssfulnesse is good? Boece. Yes forsoth
(quod I) and that souerayne good. Philoso.
Adde than (qd she) thilke good that is made
blyssfulnesse to al the forsayde thynges. For
thilke same blyssfulnesse/ that is demed to be
souerayne sufficiaunce/ thilke selfe is sou-
rayne power/ souerayne reuerence/ souerayne
clernesse or noblesse/ and souerayne delyte.

What

what sayest thou than of al these thynges / that is to saye sufficiaunce / power / and these other thynges: Ben they than as membres of blyssfulnesse / or ben they referred and brought to sourrayne good / right as al thynges that ben brought to the cheefe of hem? Boece. I understonde wel (quod I) what thou purposest to seke: but I desyre for to herken / that thou shewe it to me. Phi. Take nowe thus the discussyon of this questyon (quod she) If al these thynges (quod she) weren membres to sayse me / than weren they divers that one from that other: and suche is the nature of parties or of membres / that divers membres compowneth a body. Boece. Certes (quod I) it hath wel ben shewed here byfome / that al these thynges ben al one thyng. Phil. Than ben they no membres (quod she) For els it shulde seme that blyssfulnesse were coloyned al of o membre alone / but that is a thynge that maye not be done. Boece. This thyng (qd I than) nys not doutous / but I abyde to herken the remenaunt of thy questyon. Phil. This is open and clere (quod she) that al other thynges ben referred and brought to good. For therfore is sufficiaunce requyred / for it is demed to be good: and for thy is power requyred / for me troweth also that it be good. and this same thynge mowen we thynken / connecteth of reuerence / of noblesse / and of delyte. Than is sourrayne good the some and the cause of al that ought to ben desyred. For why thilke thyng that withholdeth no good in it selfe / ne semblaunce of good / it ne may nat wel in no maner be desyred ne requyred. And the contrary: For though that thynges by her nature ne ben not good / algates if men wenen that they ben good / yet ben they desyred as though they were verily good. And therfore it is said that men ought to wene by right / that bountie be the sourrayne fyne and the cause of al the thynges that ben to requyren. But certes thilke that is cause for whiche men requyren any thing / it semeth that thilke same thing be most desyred / as thus: If that a wight wolde riden for cause of heale / he ne desyreth not so moche the mouyng to ryden as the effecte of hys heale. Nowe than sens that al thynges ben requyred for the grace of good / they ne ben not desyred of al folke more than the same good. But we haue graunted that blyssfulnesse is that same thyng / for whiche that al these other thynges ben desyred. Than is it thus / that certes only blyssfulnesse is requyred and desyred. By whiche thynge it shewth clerely / that of good and blyssfulnesse is al one and the same substaunce.

Boece. I se not (quod I) wherfore that men myght discorden in this. Philosoph. And we haue shewed / that god and very blyssfulnesse is al one thyng. Boece. That is sothe (qd I) Philoso. Than nowe we conclude syrely / that the substaunce of god is sette in thylke same good / and in none other place.

Huc omnes pariter venite capti / Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis Terrenas habitans libido mentes. Hic erit vobis requies laborum. &c.

COmeth al togyther nowe ye that ben caught & bounde with wicked chaynes / by the decayuable delyte of erthly thynges inhabyting in your thought. Here shal be the reste of your labour: here is the hauen stable in quyete pesyble. This alone is the open refute to wretches / that is to sayne / that ye that be combred and diseased with wouldely affections / cometh nowe to this sourrayn good / that is god: that is refuge to hem that wyllen comen to hym. Al the thynges that the ryuer Tagus reueth you with his golden graueles / Or els al the thynges that the ryuer Hermus reueth with his reed bunke: or that Indus reueth / that is nempte the hote parte of the worlde / that medleth the grene stones with the whyte: ne shulde not sterren the sobynge of your thought / but rather your blynde corage within her derkenesse. Al that lyketh you here and excyteth and moueth your thoughtes / the erthe hath nourysshed it within hys lowe caues. But the shynynge / by whiche the heuen is gouerned / and whence that his strengthe / that eschewth the derke ouerthrowyng of the soule / and who so

Lapilla cues

euer may knowen thilke light of blyssfulnesse/ the wyk sayne/ that the whyte beames of the sonne ne be not clere.

Assentior (inq̃) cuncta enim firmissimis nexa rationibus constant. Tum illa. Quanti/inquit/tu estimabis/si bonum ipsum/quid sit/ agnoueris/ &c.

BOece. I assente me (quod I) for al thinges ben strogly bounden with right ferme reasone. Philoso. Howe mothe wyte thou prayseyn it (quod she) if that thou knowe what thilke good is? Boece. I wol prayse it (quod I) by pure without ende/ if it shal betyde me to knowe also togyther god that is good. Philoso. Certes (quod she) that shal I do the by very reason/if that tho thinges/ that I haue concluded a lytel here beforne/dwellen onely in her grauntyng. Boece. They dwellen graunted to the (quod I) that is to sayne/ as who sayethe/ I graunt to thy foresayd conclusyons. Philo. I haue shewed the (qd she) that the thynges/ that ben required of many folke/ne ben not very goodes ne parfyte. For they ben dyuers that one from that other. and so as eche of hem is lackynge to other/they ne haue no power to bunge a good/ that is ful and absolute. But than at erste ben they very good/ whan they ben gathered togyder al in to one forme/ & in to one werkyng: so that thilke thynge that is suffysaunt/ thilke same is power/ and reuerence/noblesse/ and mythe. And forsothe but if al these thynges be al one same thynge/ they ne haue not wherby that they mowe be put in the nombre of thynges that ought to be required and desyred. Boece. It is shewed (quod I) ne herof may there no man douten. Phi. The thynges than (qd she) that ne ben no goodes/ whan they ben dyuers/ and whan they begynnen to be al one thyng/ than ben they goodes/ ne cometh it not than by the gettynge of vnyte/ that they be maked goodes? Boece. So semeth it (quod I) Phi. but al thynge that is good (quod she) graunterst thou that it be good by the partycipacion of good or no? Boece. I graunt it (quod I) Philoso. Than muste thou graunted (qd she) by semblable reason that one and good be one same thyng. For of thynges/of whiche the essente nys not naturelly dyuers/nedes her substaunce must be one same thyng. Boece. I ne maye not denye it (quod I) Philo. Hast thou not knowen wel (quod she) that al thing that is/ hath so longe his dwellynge and his substaunce/as longe as it is one/but whan it forletteth to ben one/it muste nedes dyen and corrumpen togyder? Bo. In which maner (qd I) Philoso. Right as in bestes (quod she) whan the soule and the body ben conioyned in one/ and dwellen togyther/it is cleped a beste: and whan her vnyte is distroyed/ by the diserueraunce of that one from that other/ than sheweth it wel that it is a deed thynge/and it is no lenger no beste. And the body of a wight whyle it dwelleth in one fourme by communcion of membres/it is wel sene that it is a figure of mankynde: And if the partyes of the body be deuyded and diseuerred that one from that other/that they distrope the vnyte/the bodye forleteth to be/ that it was beforne. And who so wolde renne in the same maner by al thynges/ he shulde sene that without doute euery thynge is in his substaunce/ as longe as it is one. And whan it forleteth to be one/it dyeth and perissheth. Boece. Whan I consyder (quod I) many thynges/I se none other. Philoso. Is there any thynge (quod she) that in as moche as it lyueth naturelly/that forsaketh the talente or the appetyte of his beyng/ and desyreth to come to dethe and to corrupcion? Boece. If I consyder (quod I) the bestes that haue any maner nature of wyllyng and of nyllyng/I ne fynde no beste/but if it be constrayned fro without forthe/ that forsaketh or dispyseth the entencion to lyuen and to duren/or that wyk his thankes hasten hym to dyen. For euery beste trauayleth hym to defende and kepe the sauacion of his lyfe/ and eschewyth dethe and distruction. But certes I doute me of herbes and trees/ that ne haue no felynge soules/ne no naturel workynges/ seruynge to appetytes/ as bestes haue: whether they haue appetyte to dwellen/ and to duren. Philoso. Certes (quod she) therof haue the not doute. Now loke vpon the herbes and trees/

tures/ for they weyen fyrste in suche places as ley couenable to hem: in whiche places they mowe not dyen ne duren/ as longe as her nature maye defende hem. For some of hem weyen in feldes/ and some weyen in mountaignes/ and other weye in marrys/ and other cleauen on rockes/ and some weyen plenteous in sondes. And if any wight enforce hym to drawe hem in to other places/ they weyen dede. For nature yeueth to euery thyng that is conuenyent to hym/ and transpleteth that they ne dye/ as longe as they haue power to dwellen and to lyuen. What wylte thou sayne of this/ that they drawen al her nourysshynges by her rootes/ ryght as they hadden her mouthes yplounged within the erthe/ and sheaden by her maryes her wodde and her barke: And what wylte thou sayne of this/ that thylke thynge that is right softe/ as the marye is/ that is alwaye hydde in the sette al within/ and that is defended from without by the stedfastnesse of wodde/ and that the bitterest barkes is put apenst the distemperaunce of the heuen/ as a defendoure/ mighty to suffren harme: And thus certes mayste thou wel sene/ how we great is the dylygence of nature: For al thynges renouelen and pulyssshen hem with sede ymultiplyed. Ne there nys no man/ that ne wote wel that they ne ben right as a foundement and edefyce/ for to duren not onely for a tyme/ but ryght as for to dure perdurably by generacion. And the thynges ese/ that men weneu ne haue no soules/ ne despyse they not by semblable reason to lyuen that is hot/ that is to sayn/ that is accordynge to her nature in conseruacion of her beynge and endurynge: For wherfore elo heateth tyghtnesse the flambes by/ and the weyght presseth the erthe adowne/ but for as moche as thylke places and thilke mouynges be couenable to eurychs of hem. And forsothe euery thynge kepeth thylke/ that is accordynge and propre to hym/ ryght as thynges that ben contrarpous and enemyes entrumpen hem. And yet ȳ harde thynges (as stones) cleauen and holden her partyes togyther right faste and harde/ and defenden hem in withstadynge/ that they ne departen lightly/ and peuen place to hem/ that breaken or denyen hem: but natheleesse they retournen ayen soone in to the same thynges/ from whence they be araced. But fyre fleeth and refuseth al dyuysyon. Ne I ne treate not nowe here of wylful mourynges of the soule that is knowyng/ but of naturel entencyon of thynges/ as thus: Right as we swalowen the meate that we receyuen/ and ne thynke not on it/ and as we drawe our breathe in slepyng/ that we wete not whyle we slepen. For certes in the bestes the soule of her lyuynges ne of her deynges/ ne cometh not of the wylnynges of the soule/ but of the begynnynges of nature. For certes thorough constraynynge causes wyll despyeth and embraceth ful oft tymes the deth/ that nature dredeth/ that is to sayne/ as thus: That a man maye be constrayned so by some cause/ that his wyll despyeth and taketh the dethe/ whiche that nature hateth and dredeth ful sore. And somtyme we sene the contrary/ as thus: that the wyf of a wight disfourbeth and constrayneth that/ that nature alwaye despyeth and requireth/ that is to say the werkes of generacion/ by the whiche generacion onely dwelleth and is sustayned the longe durablyte of mortal thynges/ as thus. This charyte and this loue that euery thynge hath to hym selfe/ ne cometh not of the mouyng of the soule/ but of the entencion of nature. For the pouruey aunce of god hath yeuen to thynges/ that ben create of hym this/ that is a ful great cause to lyuen and to duren/ for whiche they despyen naturelly her lyfe/ as longe as euer they mowen: for whiche thou mayste not dreden by no maner/ that al thynges that ben any where/ that they ne requiren naturelly the ferme stablenesse of perdurable dwelling/ and ese the eschewynge of distruction.

Boece. I confesse (quod I) that I se wel nowe/ certainly wythouten dout/ the thynges that a while ago semeden vncertayne to me. Philoso. But (quod she) thylke thynge that despyeth to be and dwell perdurably/ he despyeth to ben one: for if that one were distroyed/ certes beynge shulde there none dwellen to no wyght. Boece. That is sothe (quod I) Phi. Than (quod she) despyen al thynges one.

Boece. I assent (quod I) Phi. And I haue shewed (qđ she) that yͤe same one is/ thyͤe that is good. Bo. ye forsothe (qđ I) Phi. Al thynges than (quod she) requiren good/ and thyͤer mayste thou discryuen thus: Good is thyͤe thyng that euery wight desyreth. Bo. There ne may be thought no more very thing (qđ I) for eyther al thynges be referred and brought to nought/ & flotteren without gouernour dispoyled of one/ as of her propre heed/ or els if there be any thynge/ to whiche that al thynges tenden and hyen to/ that thyng muste be the souerayne good of al goodes. Philoso. Than sayd she thus: O my norice (quod she) I haue great gladnesse of the/ for thou haste fyxed in thy herte the myddel sothfastinesse/ that is to sayne the prycke/ but this thyng hath be discouered to the/ in that thou saydest/ that thou wystest not a lytel here beforne. Boe. What is that (quod I) Philo. That thou ne wystest not (quod she) whiche was thende of thynges/ and certes that is the thing that euery wight desyreth. And for as mothe as we haue gathered and comprehẽded/ that good is thyͤe thynge that is desyred of al/ than mote we nedes confessen/ that good is the fyne of al thynges.

Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verũ/ Cupitq; nullis ille deuiis falli/ In se reuoluat intimi lucem visus. &c.

Who so seketh sothe by a depe thought/ and coueyteth to ben discreued by no mis wayes/ let him rollen and treaten within him selfe/ ỹ light of his inwarde sight: and let him gatheren ayen enclynyng in to a compace the longe mournges of his thoughtes. And lette hym teachen his corage/ that he hath enclosed and hydde in his treasours/ al that he hath compassed or sought fro without: And than thilke thynge that the blacke clowdes of errour whylom had couered/ shal light more clerely than Phebus hym selfe ne shyneth. Glosa. Who so wol seke the depe groundes of sothe in his thought/ and wol not be discreued by false preposycions/ that gone amysse from the trouthe/ let him wel examyne and rolle within him selfe/ the nature and proprietes of the thynge. And let him yet eftsones examyne & rollen his thoughtes by good delyberacion/ or that he deme. And lette hym teachen his soule/ that it hath by naturel principles ỹdelyche yhydde within it selfe/ al the trouthe/ the whiche he ymagyneth to ben in thynges without: and than al the derknesse of his mysundyng/ shal seme more cuydently to the syght of his vnderstãdyng/ than the sonne ne semeth to the syght without forthe. For restres the body bungynge the weight of forgetyng/ ne hath not chaced out of your thought al the clerenesse of your knowynge/ for certainly/ the seede of sothe holdeth and clenseth within your corage/ and it is awaked and excyted by the wyndes and by the blastes of doctryne. For wherfore els demen ye of your owne wyl the ryghtes whan ye be aswed/ but if so were that the noussyng of reason receyued/ pplunged in the depe of your herte/ that is to sayne/ how we shulde men demen the sothe of any thynge that were aswed/ and if there were a rote of sothfastinesse/ that were ypplunged and hyd in naturel principles/ the whiche sothfastinesse syued within the depenesse of the thought. And if so be/ that the muse and the doctryne of Plato syngeth sothe/ al that euery wight lerneth/ he ne dothe nothynge els than/ but recordeth/ as men recorden thynges that ben forgeten.

Tum ego/ Platoni/ inq̃/ vehementer assentior. Nam me horum iam secundo commemoras. Primum quod memoriam corporea contagione. &c.

Than sayd I thus. I accorde me gretly to Plato/ for thou recordest and remembrest me these thynges yet the seconde tyme/ that is to saye/ first whan I left my memory by the contrarpous conjunccyon of the body with the soule: & eftsones after warde/ whan I loste it confoũded/ by thy charge and by the burdone of my sorowe/ & than sayd she thus.

If thou lose (quod she) forsie the thynges

that

that thou haste graunted/ it ne shal nat ben ryght ferre/ that thou ne shalt remembren the fyrste thynge/ that thou saydest that thou nyste nat. B. What thyng (qd I) P. By whi the gouernement (qd she) that this worlde is gouerned. B. I remeue it wel (qd I) and I confesse wel/ that I ne wist it naught. But al be it so/ that I se nowe from a ferre/ what thou purposest/ algates I desyre yet to herken it of the more playnly. P. Thou ne wenest nat (qd she) a lytel here besoin/ that men shulde doute/ that this worlde is gouerned by god. B. Certes (qd I) ne yet ne dout I it nat ne I nyl neuer were that it were to doute/ as who saith/ but I wot wel that god gouerneth this worlde. And I shal answeren ȳ by what resons I am brought to this. This worlde (qd I) of so many dyuers and contrarious parties/ ne myght neuer haue ben assembled in o some/ but if there were one/ that conioyned so many dyuers thynges. And the same diuersite of her natures that so discorden/ that one fro that other muste depten/ and vnioynen the thynges that ben conioyned/ if there ne were one that conteyned/ that he hath conioyned and ybounde. Ne the certayne order of nature ne shulde nat bryng forth so ordeyne mouynges/ by places/ by tymes/ by doynges/ by spaces/ by qualyteres/ if there ne were one that were aye stedfast dwellyng/ that ordayned and disposed these dyuersytees of mouynges. And thilke thyng what so euer it be/ by whiche that al thynges ben ymaked & lad/ I clepe hym god/ that is a worde that is vsed to al folkes. Philo. Than sayd she: Sithe thou sclysie thus these thynges/ I trowe that I haue lytell more to done/ that thou myghty of welfulnes/ hole and sounde/ ne se eftsones thy countree. But let vs loken the thynges ȳ we haue purposed here beforne. Haue I not nombred & sayde (qd she) that sufficiaunce is ay blyssfulnesse. And we haue accorded ȳ god is thilke same blyssfulnes. B. yes forsoth (qd I). P. & that to gouerne this worlde (qd she) ne shall he neuer haue nede of none helpe fro without. For els yf he had nede of any helpe/ he ne shulde not haue no ful sufficiaunce. B. yis thus it mote nedes be (qd I). P. Then ordeyned he by hym selfe alone al thynges (qd she) B. That may not be denyed (qd I). P. And I haue shewed that god is ȳ same good. B. It remembreth me wel (qd I) P. Than ordeyneth he al thynges by thilke good (quod she) sythe he which we han accorded to be good gouerneth al thynges by hym selfe. And he is a key and a steyre/ by which the edifice of this worlde is kept stable & without corrupping. B. I accorde me gretely (qd I). And I haue apperceyued a lytel here beforne/ ȳ thou woldest saye thus/ Al were it so/ that it were by a thynne suspeccyon. P. I trowe wel (qd she) For as I trowe/ thou ledest no we more ententifly thyne eye/ to loken the very goodes. But natheles/ the thynge that I shal tel the/ yet ne sheweth not lasse to loken. B. What is ȳ (qd I). P. So as men trowe (qd she) & that rightfully/ ȳ god gouerneth al thynges by the key of his goodnesse. And al these same thynges that I haue taughte the hasten hem by naturell entencyon to come to good/ there maye no man doubten that they ne ben gouerned voluntaryly. And that they ne conuerten hem of her owne good wyl to her ordeynour. As that they ben accordynge and enclynyng to her gouernour and to her kynge. B. It mote nedes be so (qd I) for the realme ne shulde not seme blyssful/ yf there were a pobe of mysdrawynges in dyuers parties/ ne the saufnge of obedient thinges/ ne shulde not be then. P. Is there nothynge (qd she) that kepeth his nature/ that enforceth hym to gone ayenst god? B. No (qd I). P. & if ȳ any thyng enforced hym to withstande god/ might it auayle at last ayen hym that we haue graunted to be almyghty by the right of blyssfulnes? B. Certes (qd I) al verely it ne myght not auayle hym. P. Then is there nothyng (quod she) that eyther maye or wyll withstanden to his souerayne god. B. I trowe not (qd I) P. then (quod she) is thilke the souerayne god/ that al thynges gouerneth strongly/ and ordeyneth hem softly. Boece. Then sayd I thus/ I delyte me (quod I) not onely in thendes or i the som of the resons that thou haste concluded and proued/ but thilke woides that thou vsest/ delyten me moche more/ so that at laste fooles/ that somtyme ren-

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den great thynges/ oughten ben asshamed of hem selfe/ that is to sayne/ that we fooles that reprehenden wickedly the thynges that touchen goddes gouernaunce / we oughten ben ashamed of our selfe. As I/ that sayde that god refuseth onely the werkes of men/ and ne entermeteth not of it. Philo. Thou hast wel herde (qd she) the fables of the poetes/ how we the gyauntes assayleden heuen/ with the goddes: but forsothe the debonayre sorte of god disposed hem as it was worthy/ ꝑ is to sayne/ distroyed the gyauntes as it was worthy. But wylte thou that we reioynen togyther thylke same reasons? For peraventure of suche conionction may sterten vp some sayre sparke of sothe. Boece. Do (qd I) as the lyste. Philo. Weneste thou (qd she) that god ne be almighty? B. No man is in doute of it certes (qd I) P. No wight ne douteth it/ if he be in his mynde (quod she) But he that is almighty/ there nys nothyng that he ne may. Boe. That is sothe (qd I) Phi. Way god do yuel (qd she)? B. Naye forsothe (qd I) Philo. Than is yuel nothing (qd she) sythe that he may done none yuel/ that may done al thinges. Boece. Scornest thou me (qd I) or ells playest thou/ or disceyuest thou me/ that hast so wonnen with thy reasons / the house of Dedalus so entreslasyng that it is vnable to be vnlaced/ ꝑ thou other whyle entrest ther thou issuest/ and other whyle issuest there thou entrest. Ne foldest thou not togyther by replycacion of wordes a maner wonderful cercle or emuyronnyng of the symplycite dyuine? For certes a lytel here beforn whan thou began at blissfulnesse/ thou saydest that it is souerayn good/ and that god is the blyssfulnesse/ for whiche thou yaue me as a conenable yefte/ that is to sayne/ that no wight nys blyssful/ but if he be god also therwith. and saydest ells/ that the form of good is the substaunce of god and of blyssfulnesse. And saydest ꝑ thilke one is thylke same good/ that is required and desyred of al the kynde of thynges. And thou prouedest in disputynge/ that god gouerneth al ꝑ thinges of the world/ by the gouernaunce of bountie: And saydest that al thinges wolde obeyen to him/ and saydest that the nature of yuel is nothynge. And these thynges shewdest thou not with no reasons taken fro without/ but by proues in cercles and homlich shewyng. The whiche proues diden hem to hem selfe her faythe and her accorde entriche of hem of other. Phi. Than said she thus: I ne scorne not/ ne play/ ne disceyue the: but I haue shewed the thing that is greatest ouer al thynges/ by the yefte of god/ that we whylom prayden. For this is the fourme of diuyne substaunce/ that is suche/ that it ne slydeth not in to vttereste forayne thynges/ ne receyueth not no straunge thynges in hym. But right as Permenides sayde in greke/ of thilke diuyne substaunce: He sayd thus/ that thylke dyuyne substaunce tourneth the world and the mouable cercle of thynges/ while the ilke diuyne substaunce bepeth it selfe without mouynges/ that is to sayne/ that he meueth neuer mo/ and yet it moueth al other thynges. But natheles/ if I haue styred reasons that be not taken fro without the compace of the thyng/ of the whiche we treaten / but reasons that ben beste wed within compace: therf nys not why thou shuldest merueyle/ sythe thou hast lerned by the sentence of Plato/ that nedes the wordes mote ben cosyns to the thynges/ of whiche they speken.

Felix qui potuit boni fontem visere lucidum. Felix qui potuit grauis. ꝛc.

BLyssed is that man that maye seme the clere welle of good: Blyssful is he that may vnbynden him from the bounde of herthy erth. The poete of Thrace Orpheus/ that whilom had ryght great sorowe/ for the deth of his wyfe. After that he had maked y constrayned by his wrpely songes/ the wodes mouable to renne/ and had maked the ryuers to stonden styl/ and had maked the hartes and hyndes to ioynen diedelesse her sydes to cruel lyons/ to herken his songe / and had maked ꝑ the hare was nat egast of the hounde/ whyle was pleased by songe: So whan the moost ardaunt loue of his wyfe/ bynde the entrayles of his herte/ ne the songes that hadde ouercomen all thynges / ne myghten not aswagen her lorde Orpheus. He playned

hym

thyng of the fourty goddes/ whiche that were cruel to hym/ he wente hym to the houses of the helle: And he tempered his blandissynge songes/ by resounyng of strynges/ and spake and songe in weppynge/ al that euer he had reuyued and saued out of the noble welles of his mother Caliope the goddesse. And he songe with as moche as he myght of weppyng/ and with as moche as loue/ that doubled hys sorowe/ he myght peuen hym and teache hym/ and comoued the helle/ and required and besoughte by swete prayer/ the lordes of soules in helle of mercy/ that is to saye/ to yelden hym his wyfe. Cerberus the porter of helle/ with his thre heedes was caughte/ and al abasshed of the newe songe. And the thre goddesses/ furyes and vengeresses of felonyes/ that tourmenten ydaspien the soules/ by anoye woxen sorowful and sore/ and teeres weptyn for pite. The wame not the heed of Ixyon tourmented/ by the ouerthrowynge wheele. And Tantalus/ that was distroyed by the woodnesse of longe thurste/ dyppyng the floodes to drynke. The foule that hyght Vultur/ that eateth the stomake or the gyserny of Tityus is so fulfylled of his songe/ that it nyl eaten ne tyren no more. At the laste the lorde and iuge of soules was moued to mysericordyes/ and cryed: we ben ouercomen (quod he) yeue we to Orpheus his wyfe to beare hym compayne/ he hath wel ybought her by his songes and his dytes: but we wyl putten a lawe in this/ and couenaunt in the yefte/ that is to saynę/ that tyl he be out of helle/ yf he loke behynde hym/ that his wyfe shal come agayne vnto hym. But what is he that maye yeue a lawe to louers: loue is a greater lawe and a stronger to hym selfe than any lawe that men maye yeuen. Alas/ whan Orpheus and his wyfe were almoste at the termes of the nyght/ that is to saynę/ at the laste boundes of helle/ Orpheus loked backwarde on Euridice his wyfe/ and lost her/ it was deed. This fable apertayneth to you al/ who so euer desyreth or seketh to lede his thought in to the fourrayne daye/ that is to saye to clerenesse of soureyne good. For who so euer be so ouercomen that he fyxe his eyen in to the pytte of helle/ that is to saynę/ who so euer sette his thoughtes in erthly thynges/ al that euer he hath drawen of the noble good celestyal/ he leseth it/ whan he loketh to the helles/ this is to saynę/ in to lowe thynges of the erthe.

¶ Thus endeth the thirde boke of Boece/ and here after folweth the fourthe.

HEc cum philosophia dignitate vultus/ et oris grauitate seruata/ leniter/ suauiterq; cecinisset/ Tum ego non dum penitus infiti merozis oblitus. &c.

WHan Philosophye had songen softely and delectably the forsaid thinges/ keppynge the dignyte of her chere/ and the weyght of her wordes. I than that ne had al vtterly forgeten the wepyng and the mournynge that was set in myn herte/ forbrake the entencion of her/ that entended yet to saynę some other thynges.

O (quod I) thou that arte gyderesse of verye lyght/ the thynges that thou hast sayde me hytherto/ ben to me so clere and shewynge by the dyuyne kepyng of hem/ and by thy reasons/ that they ne mowen ben ouercomen. And thylke thynges/ that thou toldest me/ al be it so that I had whylome forgeten hem/ for the sorowe of the wronge that hath be done to me: yet neuertheles they ne weren not vtterly vnknowen to me. But this same is namely a ryght great cause of my sorowe/ so that as the gouernour of thynges is good/ yf that pures mowen ben by any waies: or elles yf that pures passen without punisshynge/ the whiche thyng only/ howe worthy is it to ben wondred vpon. Thou considerest it wel thy selfe certaunly. But yet to this thynge there is yet another thynge ioyned more to be wondred vpon. For felonye is empereresse/ and flourysh full of ryches/ and vertue nys not al onely without meedes/ but it is caste downe/ and eke fotroden vnder the fete of felonous folke: and it abydeth the tourmentes in stede of wicked felons. Of al whiche thynges there

is no

is no wight may marueyle ynough ne com-
playne/ that suche thynges be doone in the
reigne of god/ that al thynges wote/ and al
thynges may/ and ne wyl not onely but good
thynges. Than sayd she thus: Lettes (quod
she) that were a great maruayle/ and an a-
basshyng without ende/ and wel more horry-
ble than al the monsters/ if it were as thou
wenest/ that is to sayne/ that in the ryght or-
dayne house of so moche a father and an or-
daynour of meyne/ that the vessels that ben
soule and vyle/ shulde ben honoured and he-
ryed/ and the precious vessels shulde ben de-
fouled and vyle. But it is not so/ for if the
thynges/ that I haue concluded a lytel here be-
forne/ ben kepte hole and vnaraced/ thou shalt
wel knowe by ꝑ auctorite of god (of the whose
reigne I speke) that certes the good folke be
alwaye mighty/ and shrewes ben alway out-
caste and feble. Ne the vyces be neuer more
without payne/ ne the vertues ne be not with-
out mede. And that blissfulnesse cometh alway
to good folke/ and infortune cometh alwaye
to wicked folke. And thou shalt wel knowen
many thynges of this vynde/ that shulde cra-
sen thy playntes/ and strengthen the with sted
faste sadnesse. And for thou haste sene the
forme of very blyssfulnesse by me that haue
whyloin shewed it the/ and thou hast knowen
in whome blissfulnesse is set: al thynge treas-
ted/ that I trowe be necessarye to put fourthe/
I shal shewen the the waye/ that shal bringen
the ayen vnto thyn house: and I shal fyxe fe-
thers in thy thought/ by whiche it may aryse
in heyght/ so that al trybulacion ydone away/
thou by my gydyng and by my pathe/ and by
my stedes/ shalte mowen retourne hole and
sounde in to thy countrey.

Sunt etenim penne volucres mihi/
Que celsa conscendunt poli/ Quas sibi cū
velox mens induit. ꝛc.

Than for thy swyfte fethers that sour-
mounten the heyghte of the heuen/
whan the swyfte thought hath clothed it in
tho feathers/ it dispyseth the hateful erthes/
and surmounteth the roundenesse of the great
ayre/ & it seeth the cloudes behynde his backe/
and passeth the heyght of the regyon of the
fyre/ that enchaufeth by the swyfte mouynge
of the firmament/ tyl that he aryseth in to the
houses/ that bearen the sterres/ and ioyneth
the waye with the sonne Phebus/ and sclau-
shyppeth the waye of the olde colde Saturnus/
& he ymaked a knyght of the clere sterre/
that is to sayne/ whan the thought is made
goddes knyght/ by the sekynge of clere trouthe
to comen to the very knowlege of god. And
thilke soule renneth by the cercle of sterres/ in
al the places there as the shynynge nyghtes
ypaynted/ that is to sayne/ the nyght that is
cloudlesse. For ony nyghtes that be cloudlesse/
it semeth that the heuen were payuted with
dyuers ymages of sterres. And whan he hath
done there ynoughe/ he shal forleten the lasse
heuen/ and he shal presen and wenden ou the
backe of the swyfte fyrmament/ and he shal
be maked parfyte of the worshypful lyght of
god. There holdeth the lorde of thynges the
ceptre of his might/ and attempreth the gu-
uernementes of the worlde/ and the shynyn-
ynge of thynges/ stable in hym selfe/ gouerneth
the swyfte carte or wayne/ that is to sayne/
the circuler mouyng of the sonne. And if thy
waye ledeth the ayen/ so that thou be brought
thyder/ than wyte thou sayr/ that is the cou-
traye that thou requirest/ of whiche thou ne
haddest no myndе: but nowe it remembreth me
wel/ here was I borne/ here wol I fasten my
degrees/ here wol I dwel. But if the lyketh
than to loken on the derknesses of the erthe/
that thou haste forleten/ than shalte thou fynd
that these felonous tyraunies/ that the wret-
ched people dredeth nowe/ shullen be cyyled
from thilke fayre countrey.

Tū ego pape inquā/ vt magna prōmittis.
Nec dubito/ quin possis efficere: tu modo
quem extraueris/ ne moreris. ꝛc.

Than sayd I thus. O I wonder me
that ꝑ behetest me so great thynges.
Ne I ne doute not ꝑ thou ne mayst
wel parfourme ꝑ thou behetest: but I pray the
thou

the that thou ne tary not/to tel me thilk thinges/ that thou hast moued. Ph. First (qꝺ she) thou muste nedes knowe/ that good folke ben alwaye stronge and mighty/ and the shrewes ben feble and deserte/ and naked of al strengthe. And of these thynges rertes euerpese of hym is declared and shewed by other. For as good and yuel ben two contrarye/ if so be that good be stedfaste/ than sheweth the feblesse al openly. And if thou knowe clerely the feblenesse of yuel/ the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. But for as moche as the saythe of my sentence shal be the more ferme and habundante/ I wol gone by that one way and by that other/ and I wol confirme the thynges that ben purposed nowe on this syde/ and nowe on that syde. Two thynges there ben/ in whiche the effecte of al the dedes of mans pnoe standeth/ that is to sayne/ wyll and power: and if that one of these two sayleth/ there nys no thyng that may be doone. For if that wyl lacketh/ there nys no wight that vndertaketh to do that he wol not done: And if power sayleth/ the wyll nys but vole/ and stante for naught. And therof cometh it/ that if thou se a wight that wolde getten that he maye not getten/ thou mayst not doute that power ne sayleth hym to hauen that he wolde. Boece. This is open and clere (qꝺ I) ne it ne may not ben denyed in no maner. Philo. And if thou se a wight (quod she) that hath done that he wolde haue/ thou nyl not doute/ that he ne hath had power to done it. B. No (quod I) P. And in that that euery wight maye/ in that men holden hem mighty to done a thyng. In somoche as a man is mighty to done a thing/ in so moche men holde him mighty: and in that that he ne may/ in that men demen hym to be feble. Bo. I confesse it wel (qꝺ I) Phi. Remembre the (quod she) that I haue gathered and shewed by the forsayde reasons/ that al the entencion of the wyl of mans pnde/ whiche that is ladde by diuers studyes/ hasteth to comen to blysfulnesse. Boe. It remembreth me wel (qꝺ I) that it hath ben shewed. Philoso. And recordest the nowgte than (quod she) that blysfulnesse is thilke same good that men requiren/ so that whan blysfulnesse is requyred of al:

Boece. It recordeth me nat (quod I) for I haue it alwaye in my memorie fyxed. Philo. Al folke than (quod she) good and eke badde enforcen hem without difference of entencion to comen to good. Boece. This is very consequence (qꝺ I) Phi. And certayne is (qꝺ she) that by gettyng of good be men maked good. Boece. That is certayne (quod I) P. Than getten good men that they despysen. Boece. So it semeth (quod I) Philo. But wicked folke (quod she) if they getten the good that they despysen/ they ne mowen not be wicked. Boe. So it is (quod I) Phi. Than so as that one and that other (quod she) despysen the good/ and the good folke getten the good/ and not the wicked folke: Than it is no doute that the good folke ne be mighty/ and wicked folke be feble. Boe. Who so that euer douteth of this/ he ne maye not conspder the nature of thynges ne the consequence of reasons. Philoso. And ouer this (quod she) if that there ben two thynges that haue one same purpose by fynde/ And that one of hem pursueth and persourmeth that same thyng by naturel office/ and that other ne may not done thilke office naturel/ but folweth by other maner/ than is couenable to nature/ hym that accomplysheth his purpose fyndely/ and yet he ne accomplysheth not his owne purpose: whether of these two demest thou for more mighty? Boece. If that I coniecte (quod I) that thou woldest say/ algates I despise yet to herken it more plainly of the. Philo. Thou nylte not than denye (quod she) that the mouement of gonge nys in men by fynde. Boece. No forsothe (quod I) Philo. Ne thou doutest not (quod she) that thylke naturell office of gonge/ ne be the office of sete. Boece. I ne doute it not (quod I) Phi. Than (quod she) if that a wight be mighty to moue and gothe vpon his sete/ and another/ to whome thylke naturel office of sete lacketh/ enforseth hym to go creppinge on his handes/ whiche of these two ought to be holden the more mighty by right. Boece. Lyytle forthe (quod I) the remenante. Philosophie. For no wyght ne douteth/ that he that maye gon by naturel office of sete/ ne be more mighty thanne he that ne maye not. But the

soule

is no wight may marueyle enough ne com-
playne/ that suche thynges be doone in the
reigne of god/ that al thynges wote/ and al
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many thynges of this ynde/ that shulde cra-
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whylom shewed it the/ and thou hast knowen
in whome blissfulnesse is set: althynge treas-
ted/ that I trowe be necessarye to put forthe/
I shal shewen the the waye/ that shal bringen
the ayen vnto thyn house: and I shal fyxe fe-
thers in thy thought/ by whiche it may arysen
in heyght/ so that al trybulacion ydone away/
thou by my gydyng and by my pathe/ and by
my stedes/ shalte mowen retourne hole and
sounde in to thy countrey.

Sunt etenim penne volucres michi/
Que celsa conscendunt poli/ Quas sibi cū
velox mens induit. ꝛc.

Than for thy swyfte fethers that sour-
mounten the heyghte of the heuen/
whan the swyfte thought hath clothed it in
tho feathers/ it dispyseth the hateful erthes/
and surmounteth the roundenesse of the great
ayre/ & it seeth the cloudes behynde his backe/
and passeth the heyght of the regyon of the
fyre/ that enchaufeth by the swyfte mouyng
of the firmament/ tyl that he aryseth in to the
houses/ that bearen the sterres/ and ioyneth
the waye with the sonne Phebus/ and stan-
shyppeth the waye of the olde colde Saturnus/
& he ymaked a knyght of the clere sterre/
that is to sayne/ whan the thought is made
goddes knight/ by the sekynge of clere trouthe
to comen to the very knowlege of god. And
thilke soule renneth by the cercle of sterres/ in
al the places there as the shynynge nyght is
ypaynted/ that is to sayne/ the nyght that is
cloudelesse. For on nyghtes that be cloudelesse/
it semeth that the heuen were paynted with
dyuers ymages of sterres. And whan he hath
done there ynoughe/ he shal forleten the sixte
heuen/ and he shal presen and wenden on the
backe of the swyfte firmament/ and he shal
be maked parfyte of the worshypful yghte of
god. There holdeth the lorde of thynges the
ceptre of his might/ and attempreth the go-
uernementes of the worlde/ and the shynynge
ruge of thynges/ stable in hym selfe/ gouerneth
the swyfte carte or wayne/ that is to sayne/
the circuler mouyng of the sonne. And if thy
waye ledeth the ayen/ so that thou be brought
thyder/ than wylte thou saye/ that is the cou-
traye that thou requirest/ of whiche thou ne
haddest no mynde: but nowe it remembreth me
wel/ here was I borne/ here wol I fasten my
degree/ here wol I dwel. But if the lyketh
than to lokyn on the derkenesses of the erthe/
that thou haste forleten/ than shalte thou fynd
that these felonous tyraunten/ that the wret-
ched people dredeth nowe/ shullen be exyled
from thilke fayre countrey.

Tū ego pape inquā/ vt magna ymmitis.
Nec dubito/ quin pollis efficere: tu modo
quem exitaueris/ ne mouere. ꝛc.

Than sayd I thus. O I beseke yu
that ꝑ besetest me so great thynge.
Ne I ne doute not ꝑ thou ne mayst
wel parfourme ꝑ thou besetest: but I pray the
that

this that thou ne tary not/to tel me thilk thinge/ that thou haſt moued. Ph. Firſt (qꝺ ſhe) thou muſte nedes knowe/ that good folke ben alwaye ſtronge and mighty/ and the ſhrewes ben feble and deſerte/and naked of al ſtrengthe. And of theſe thynges certes euerythe of hem is declared and ſhewed by other. For as good and yuel ben two contraryes/if ſo be that good be ſtedfaſte/ thanne ſhewith the feblſſe al openly. And if thou knowe clerely the ſtarkneſſe of yuel/the ſtedfaſtneſſe of good is two wey. But for as moche as the ſayethe of my ſentence ſhal be the more ferme and habundante/ I wol gone by that one way and by that other/ and I wol confirme the thynges that ben purpoſed nowe on this ſyde/ and nowe on that ſyde. Two thynges ther ben/ in whiche the effecte of al the dedes of mankynde ſtandeth/ that is to ſayne/ wyll and power: and if that one of theſe two faylleth/ there nys nothyng that may be doone. For if that wyl lacketh/ there nys no wight that vndertaketh to do that he wol not done: And if power fayleth/ the wyll nys but vole/ and ſtante for nought. And therof cometh it/ that if thou ſe a wight that wolde getten that he maye not getten/ thou mayſt not doute that power ne fayleth him to hauen that he wolde. Boece. This is open and clere (qꝺ I) ne it ne may not ben beyed in no maner. Philo. And if thou ſe a wight (quod ſhe) that hath done that he wolde done/ thou nylt not doute/ that he ne hath had power to done it. B. No (quod I) P. And in that that euery wight maye/ in that men halden hem mighty to done a thyng. In ſomache as a man is mighty to done a thig/ in ſo moche men holde him mighty: and in that that he ne may/ in that men demen him to be feble. Bo. I confeſſe it wel (qꝺ I) Phi. Remembre the (quod ſhe) that I haue gathered and ſhewed by the forſayde reaſons/ that al the entencion of the wyl of mankynde/ whiche that is ladde by oures fyndyes/ haſteth to comen to blyſſfulneſſe. Boe. It remembreth me wel (qꝺ I) that it hath ben ſhewed. Philoſo. And retorneth the nought thanne (quod ſhe) that blyſſfulneſſe is thylke ſame good that men requiren/ ſo that whan blyſſfulneſſe is requyred of al:

Boece. It retordeth me nat (quod I) for I haue it alwaye in my memorie ſyyed. Philo. Al folke thanne (quod ſhe) good and eke badde enforcen hem without difference of entencion to comen to good. Boece. This is ful conſequence (qꝺ I) Phi. And certayne is (qꝺ ſhe) that by gettyng of good be men maked good. Boece. That is certayne (quod I) P. Than getten good men that they deſyren. Boece. So it ſemeth (quod I) Philo. But wicked folke (quod ſhe) if they getten the good that they deſyren/ they ne mowen not be wicked. Boe. So it is (quod I) Phi. Than ſo as that one and that other (quod ſhe) deſyren the good/ and the good folke getten the good/ and not the wicked folke: Than it is no doute that the good folke ne be mighty/ and wicked folke be feble. Boe. Who ſo that euer douteth of this/ he ne maye not conſyder the nature of thynges ne the conſequence of reaſons. Philoſo. And ouer this (quod ſhe) if that there ben two thynges that haue one ſame purpoſe by ſyndes/ And that one of hem purſueth and perfourmeth that ſame thyng by naturel office/ and that other ne may not done thilke office naturel/ but folweth by other maner/ than is couenable to nature/ hym that accomplyſſheth his purpoſe ſyndely/ and yet he ne accomplyſſheth not his owne purpoſe: whether of theſe two demeſt thou for more mighty? Boece. If that I conſeete (quod I) that thou wolꝺeſt ſay/ algates I deſyre yet to herken it more plainly of the. Philo. Thou nylte not than denye (quod ſhe) that the mouement of gonge nys in men by ſyndes. Boece. No forſothe (quod I) Philo. Ne thou douteſt not (quod ſhe) that thylke naturell office of gonge/ ne be the office of fete. Boece. I ne doute it not (quod I) Phi. Than (quod ſhe) if that a wight be mighty to moue and gothe vpon his fete/ and another/ to whome thylke naturel office of fete lacketh/ enforceth hym to go creppynge on his hande/ whiche of theſe two ought to be holden the more mighty by right. Boece. Knytte forthe (quod I) the remenante. Philoſophie. For no wyght ne douteth/ that he that maye goon by naturel office of fete/ ne be more mighty than he that ne maye not. But the

ſoule

fouerayne good (quod she) that is euery lyke purposed to the good and to the badde. The good folke seken it by naturel office of vertues/ and shrewes enforcen hem to getten it by dyuers couetyses of erthly thynges/ whiche that nys no naturel office to getten thilke fouerayne good. Trowest thou that it be any otherwyse? Do. Naye (quod I) for the consequence is open/ and shewynge of thynges that I haue graunted/ that nedes good folke moten ben mighty/ and shrewes moten ben feble and vnmighty. Philo. Thou rennest a ryght before me (qd she) and this is the iugement/ that is to sayne/ I iuge of right/ as these leches ben wonte to hopen of sicke folke/ whan they apperceyuen/ that nature is redressed and withstandeth to the maladie. But for I se the nowe al redy to the withstandynge/ I shal shewe the more thilke and contynuel reasons. For loke howe gretly sheweth the febleneſſe and infirmyte of wicked folke/ that ne nowen not comen to that her naturel entencion leadeth hem: And yet almoste thilke naturel entencion constrayneth hem. And what were to demen than of shrewes/ if thilke naturel helpe had forleten hem/ the whiche naturel helpe of entencion gothe alwaye before hem/ and is so great/ that vnneth it may be ouercomen? Consyder than howe great defaute of power/ and howe great febleſſe there is in wicked felonous folke/ as who sayth/ the gretter thynge that is coueyted/ and the desyre not accõplyſshed/ of the lasse myght is he that coueyteth it/ and may not acomplyſſhe. And for thy philosophie sayth thus by fouerayn good: Ne shrewes ne requiren not lyght medes ne vayne games/ whiche they ne maye not folowen ne holden/ but they faylen of thilke some of the heyght of thynges/ that is to sayne/ fouerayne good. Ne these wretches ne comen not to theffecte of fouerayne good/ the whiche they enforcen hem onely to getten by nyghtes & by dayes/ in gettyng of whiche good/ the strẽgth of good folke is ful wel ysene. For right as thou myghtest demen hym mighty of goynge/ that gothe on his fete tyl he myght comen to thylke place/ fro the whiche place there ne laye no way further to be gon: right so myst thou nedes demen hym for right mighty/ which that getteth and attayneth to the ende of al thynges/ whiche that ben to desyren/ beyonde the whiche ende there nys nothynge to desyre. Of the whiche power of good folke men maye conclude/ that we wicked men semen to be vnrayne and naked of al strength. For why forleten they vertues and folowen vyces/ nys it not for that they ne knowen not the goodes? But what thyng is more feble and more caytif/ than is the blyndneſſe of ignorance? or els they knowen wel/ whiche thynges they oughten folowen/ but lechery and coueityse ouerthroweth hem misturned. And certes so dothe distemperaunce to feble men/ that mowe not withsitten agen these vyces. Ne knowe they not wel that they forleten the good wylfully/ and tournen hem wilfully to vyces. And in this wyse they ne forleten not onely to be mighty/ but they forleten al vtterly in any wyse for to ben. For they that forleten the comune fyne of al thynges that ben/ they forleten also therwithal for to ben. And peraunturest shalt semen to some folk/ that this were a mervaile to sayne/ that shrewes/ whiche that conteynen the more ptes of men/ ne ben not/ ne haue no beyng. But natheleſſe it is so/ and thus stant this thynge. For they that be shrewes/ I denye not/ but that they be shrewes/ but I denye symplye and plainly that they ne be not/ ne haue no beyng. For right as thou mightest sayne of the carayne of a man/ that it were a ded man: so graunt I wel forsothe/ that vycious folke ben wicked/ but I ne may not absolutly and symplye graunt that they ben. For thilke thyng that with holdeth ordre and kepeth nature/ thilke thynge is and hath beyng. But what thyng sayeth that/ that is to say/ he that forleteth naturel ordre/ he forleteth thilke thynge that is set in his nature? But thou wolt sayne/ the shrewes mowen. Certes that ne denye I not: but certes her power ne dispendeth not of strẽgth/ but of febleſſe/ for they mowen doone wickednesse/ the whiche they ne myght not/ if they myghten dwellen in the forme and in the doyng of good people. And this power sheweth anydenly/ that they mowen right naught. For so as I haue gadred & proued

that

fytel here before/ that yuel is not/ and so as shewes may only but shrudnesse. Thus consdispon is al clere/ ꝑ shewes ne mo why right nought/ ne haue no power. And for as moche as thou vnderstodest which is the strength of this power/ I haue despuysshed a fytel here before/ that no thyng nys so mighty as soues rayne good. Boece. That is sothe (qꝺ I) P. And thylke same sourrayne good maye done none yuel. Boece. Certes no (qꝺ I) Philo. Is there any wight than (qꝺ she) that weneth that men mo wey done al thynges. Boe. No may (qꝺ I) but if he be out of his wyt. Phi. But certes shewes mo wey don yuels (qꝺ she) Boece. Ye wolde god (quod I) that they ne mighten done none. Phi. Than (quod she) so as he that is mighty to done onely good thynges/ he maye done al thynges/ and they that wey mighty to done yuel thynges/ ne mo wey not al thynges. Than is it open thynge and manyfest/ that they that mo wey don yuel ben of lasse power. And yet to proue this consdispon there helpeth me this/ that I haue shewed here before/ that al power is to be nombred amonge thynges that men oughten requre. And I haue shewed that al thinges that oughten ben despred be referred to good/ evyght as to a maner heyght of her nature: but for to mo wey done yuel and felonye/ ne maye not ben referred to god. Than is not yuel of the nombre of thynges that oughten to ben despred and requred. Than is it open and clere that the power ne the moanyng of shrewes nys no power. And of al these thynges it sheweth wel that the good folke ben certaynly mighty/ and the shrewes doutlesse vnmighty. And it is clere and open that thylke sentence of Plato is very and sothe/ that sayth that onely wisemen may done that they despren/ and shrewes mo wey fulfyll that hem lyketh/ but that they despren/ that is to sayne to come to sourrayne good/ they ne haue no power to accomplisshe it. For shrewes done what hem lyste/ whan by the thynges in which they delyten/ they weenen to attayne to thilke good that they despren/ but they ne getten ne attayne not therto/ for vyces ne comen not to blysfulnesse.

Quos vides sedere celsos Solii culmine reges Purpura claros nitente. ꝛc.

Who so that the coueytuses of her vayne apparayles might stryppen of these proude kynges/ that thou seest sytten an hygh in her chayres/ glysterynge in shynynge purpure/ enuyronned with sorowful armures/ manassynge with cruel mouthe/ blowyng by woodnesse of hert/ he shulde sene that thilke lordes beaten within her corages ful strapte chaynes: for lechery tourmenteth hem on that on syde with gredy venymes and troublable ire/ that arayseth in hem the floode of troublynges/ tourmenteth on that other syde/ her thought or sorowe hait hem wery and praught/ or slyding and dyscrpynge hope tourmenteth hem. And therfore sythe thou sest one heed/ that is to sayne/ one tyraunt beateth so many tyrannyes/ than ne dothe thilke tyraunt not that he despryeth sythe he is caste down with so many wicked lordes/ that is to sayne/ so many vyces that haue so wickedly lordshyps ouer hym.

Vides ne igitur quãdo in ceno phĩa volutantur/ q̃ p̃obitas luce relplẽdeat: in quo perspicuũ ẽſt nunq̃ bonis p̃emia. ꝛc.

Sest thou not than in how we great sythe these shrewes ben ywrapped/ and with whiche cleernesse these good folke shynen. By this sheweth it wel that to good folke ne lacketh neuer mo her medes/ ne shrewes lacken neuer more tourmentes. For of al thynges that be done/ thilke thing for whiche any thinge is done/ it semeth as by right/ that thilke thing be ꝑ mede of that/ as thus: If a man renneth in the stadye or in the forlonge for the crowne: than lyeth the mede in the crowne for whiche he renneth. And I haue shewed that blysfulnesse is thilke same good/ for whiche ꝑ al thynges ben done. Than is thilke same good purposed to ꝑ werkes of mankynde/ right as a cõmune mede/ whiche mede ne maye not be dyscuered from good folke: For no wight as by right/ from thenssouth that him lacketh goodnesse/ ne shal be cleped good: for whych thyng folke of good

maners her medes ne forsaken hem neuer mo. For albeit so that shrewes wayen as wode as hem lyst ayenst good folke / yet neuerthelesse the crowne of wysemen/ ne shal not fallen ne faden fro forayne shrewednesse/ ne benymmen not fro the corage of good people her propre honour. But if any wyght reioysed him of goodnesse/that he had taken fro without/ as who sayth/if a man had his goodnesse of any other man than of him selfe: certes he ꝑ yaue him thilke goodnesse/or elles some other wight myght bynome it him. But for as moche as to euery wight his propre bounte yeueth him his mede/ than at erste shal he sayen of mede whan he forleteth to be good. And at the last/ so as al medes ben requited/ for men weneth that they be good/ who is he that nolde deme/ that he ꝑ is right mighty of good/were parteles of mede: And of what mede shal he be reguerdoned. Certes of right fayre mede and right great/ abouen al medes. Remembre the of thilke noble corallarie that I yaue the a lyte here beforne/and gather it togyther in this maner. So as god hym selfe is vlissfulnesse/ than is it clere and certayn/ that al good people ben maked blissful/ for they ben good/ and thilke people that ben blissful/ it acordeth and is conuenable to be goddes. Than is the mede of people suche/that no daye ne shal enpayren it/ne no wickednesse shal dyssey it/ ne power of no wight ne shal not amenuse it/that is to sayne/that ben maked goddes. And sythe it is thus/that good men ne fayleth neuer more of her mede/certes no man ne may doute of ꝑ vn departable payne of shrewes/ that is to sayn/ that the payne of shrewes departeth not from hem selfe neuer mo. For so as good and yuel/ and payne and medes be contrarye / it mote nedes be/ that right as we se betyden in guerdone of good/ that also mote the payne of the yuel answere by the cõtrarie ꝑties to shrewes. Nowe than so as bounte and prowesse ben mede to good folke/ also is shrewednesse it selfe tourmente to shrewes. Than who so euer is entetched and defouled with payne/he ne douteth not/that he is entetched and defouled with yuel. If shrewes than wollen prayse hem selfe/ may it semen to hem that they ben with outen partie of tourment/sythe they ben suche that the vttreste wickednesse/ ꝑ is to saye/ wicked shrewes/ which is the vttreste & worste spyce of shrewednesse/ ne defouleth ne entecheth not hem only/but infecteth and enuenymeth gretly. And also loke on shrewes/that ben the contrarie partie of good men/ howe great payne felonshyppeth and fouleth hem: for thou hast lerned a ryghte here beforne/ that al thyng that is and hath beyng/ is one/and thilke same one is good: than is this the consequence/ that it semeth wel/ that al thyng that is and hath beynge/ is good/ that is to sayne/as who sayth/ that beynge/ vnyte and goodnesse is al one. And in this maner it folowth than/ that al thynge that sayleth to be good/ it styntheth for to be and for to haue any maner beyng: wherefore it is that shrewes styntyn for to be that they weren. But thilke other forme of mankynde/ that is to sayne/ the fourme of the bodye without/ sheweth that these shrewes weren whylom men/ wherfore whan they ben peruerted and tourned in to maner/ certes than they haue forlorne the nature of mankynde: But so as onely bountie and prowesse maye enhaunsen euery man/ ouer men: than mote it nedes be that shrewes/ whiche that shrewednesse hath casten out of the condycion of mankynde/ ben put vnder the merye and desserte of men. Than betydeth it/ that if thou sees a wight whiche that is transfourmed in to bestes/thou mayest not wene that he be a man: For if he be ardaunt in auarice/ and that he be a raueinour by violence of forayne rychesse/ thou shalte sayne that he is lyke a wolfe. And if he be felonous and withouten reste/and enuyous his tonge to chydinges/ thou shalte lyken him to the hounde. And if he be a pryuy awaytour hydde/ and reioysed him to rauisshe by wyles/ thou shalte sayne him lyke to the foxe whelpes. And if he be distempred and ouerlyth for ire/ men shal weneu that he beareth the corage of a lyon. And if he be dredeful and flyeng/ and dredeth thynges whiche that he oughten not to be dredde/ men shal holde him lyke to the hart. And if he be slowe and astonyed and lache/ men shal holde him lyke to an asse. And if he be lyght and vnstedefast

of

of courage/and chaungeth aye his studies/wery shal holde hem lyke to the bydes. And if he be plaunged in soule and luciene lupurpes/ he is withholden in the soule delices of the soule so me. Than solo weth it/that he that for lust bounte and pio wesse/ he foluteth to be a man/ sythe he ne may not passen in the conditeon of god/he is turned in to a beest.

Vela Maricii ducis/ Et bagas pelago tutus Cirrus appulit insule/ Pulcyra quā crudelis dea Solis edita femine.&c.

CIrcus the wynde aryued the sayles of Ulixes duke of the contre of Marne and his wandrynge shyppes by the see in to the yle there as Circes the fayre goddesse doughter of the sonne dwelleth / that medleth to her newe gestes/drynkes that hem touched & maked with enchauntementes. And after that hyr hande mighty ouer the herbes had chaunged hyr gestes in to dyuers maneres / that one of hem in couered his face with forme of a boor/that other is chaunged in to a lyon of the countre of Marmouse / and his nayles & his tethe weren. That other of hem is newly chaunged in to a wolfe / & howleth whan he wolde wepe/that other goth debonayrly in the house as a tygre of Inde. But all be it so that the godheed of Mercury that is cleped the bryde of Archadie hath had mercy of the duke Ulixes byseged with dyuerse pestilences / & hath saued him fro ỹ pestilence of his hostesse/ algates the rowers and the marynere hadde by this pchaunge in to hyr mouthes/and dronken the wicked dunkes. They ỹ weren mapen swyne/hadden by this pchaunged hyr mete of lucre/ for to eten aboute of Okes. None of hyr symmes ne dwelleth with hem hoole / but they han lost the hope and the body/ only her thought dwelleth with hem stable / ỹ wepeth and ypwayleth the monstruous chaungynge that they suffren. Ouer lyght hande/as who seyth sone and lyght is the hande of Circes ỹ enchaunteresse/ that chaungeth the bodyes of folke in to bestes to regarde and to compary son of mutacyon that is maked by Ulixes/ ne the herbes of Circes ne be not myghty/ for all be it soo that they may chaungen the symmes of the body/algate yet they may not chaunge the hertes/for within is yhyd the strength and the vigoure of men in the secretour of hyr hertes/that is to sayn/the strength of reason/ but thylke venymes of Ulixes to drawen a man to hem more mightely thā the venym of Circes/ for Ulixes ben so cruell that they perfery & thoro me passen the courage within/and thoughe they ne anoye not the body/yet Ulixes wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.

Tu ergo fator/ inq̄/ nec iniuria dici vt deo vitiosos/tam et si humani corporis spe ciem seruent.&c.

THan sayd I thus: I confesse and am aknowe it (qd I) ne I ne se not that men maye saye/ as by right/that shrewes ben chaunged in to bestes/ by the qualyte of her soules/al be it so that they kepen yet the forme of the body of manhyde: but I wolde not of shrewes/of whiche the thought cruel & woode/ woodeth alwaye to the dystruction of good men/ that it were leful to hem to doone that.

Certes (quod she) ne it is not leful to hem/ as I shal wel shewe the in couenable place: but natheless if so were that thylke that men wene ben lesul to shrewes/ were bynommed hem/so that they ne might not anoyen or doone harme to good men/ certes a great partye of the payne to shrewes shulde ben alleged and releued. For al be it so that it ne seme credyble thynge peraventure to some folke/ that it mote nedes be that the shrewes ben more wretches and sely/whan they maye ful doone and parfourme that they conceyten / than if they myght not accomplysshe that they conceyten: For if so be that it be wretchednesse to wylnen to doue yuel/ than is it more wretchednesse to mowen done yuel/ without whiche mowyng/ the wretched wyl shulde languysshe without effecte. Than sythe euery of these thynges hath his wretchednesse/ that is to sayne/ wyl to done yuel/and mowynge to doone yuel / it mote nedes be that they shrewes be confoun-

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ned by her vnselynesse/that wolen̄ no wery and parfourmen̄ felonyes and shrewdnesses. Bo. I acorde me (qđ I) but I desyre gretly/ that shrewes lofien soone thylke vnselynesse/ that is to sayn/ that shrewes weren̄ dispoyled of niowynge to done yuel. Phi. So shulden they (quod she) soner peraventure than thou woldest/or soner than they hem selfe were: for there nys nothyng so late in so shorte boundes of this lyfe/that is longe to abyde/ namely to a courage immortel. Of whiche shrewes the great hope & the hye compassinges of shrewdnesse/ is oft destroyed by a sodeyn ende or they be ware. And that thyng establysseth to shrewes/ ꝑ ende of her shrewdnes/ for if ꝑ shrewdnes maketh wretches/ than must he neden be most wretche ꝑ longest is a shrewe/ the which wycked shrewes wolde I demyn aldermooste caytyfes and vnsely/if her shrewdnes ne were fynysshed at lerst way by bitterest dethe/ for if I haue concluded sothe of the vnselynesse of shrewdnes/thā sheweth it playnly/ that thilke wretchednes is withouten ende/ the whiche is certayne to be perdurable. Boece. Certes (qđ I)this conclusyon is harde and wonderful to graunte. But I knowe wel that it accordeth moche to thynges that I haue graunted here before. Philo. Thou hast (quod she) ryght estymacyon of this. But who so euer wene that it be a harde thynge to accorde hym̄ to a conclusyon/it is right that he shewe that some of ꝑ premysses ben̄ false/or els he mote shewe that the collacyon of proposycyons nys not spedeful to a necessary conclusyon. And if it ne be not so/but that the premisses ben̄ ygrauñted/there nys not why he shulde blame the argument. For this thing ꝑ I shal tel the nowe/ ne shall not seme lasse wonderful/ but of the thinges that ben̄ to fore. Also it is necessary/ as who sayth it followeth of that whiche that is purposed before. Boece. What is ꝑ (quod I) Phi. Certes (quod she) ꝑ is/ ꝑ these wycked shrewes be more blisful or elles lasse wretches that abyen ꝑ tourmentes that they haue deserued/than if no payne of Justyce ne chastysed hem̄. Ne this ne say I not nowe/ for that any man myght thynke ꝑ the maneres of shrewes ben̄ coryged and chastysed by vengeaunce/ & that they be brought to the ryght weye by the drede of tourment/ ne for that they yeuen to other folkes ensample to flyen̄ fro vyces. But I vnderstande yet in another maner/ ꝑ shrewes ben̄ more vnsely whan they ne be not punysshed/ al be it so that there ne be had no reason or lawe of correccyon ne none ensample of losynge. Boece. And what maner shal that ben̄ (qđ I) other than hath be tolde here before: Philo. Haue we not graunted they (quod she) that good folke ben̄ blysful/ and shrewes ben̄ wretches: Boece. yes (quod I) Philo. Than (quod she) yf ꝑ any good were added to the wretchednesse of any wyght/ nys he not more weleful/ than he that ne hath no medlyng of good in his solitary wretchednes: Bot. So semyth it (quod I). Phi. And what sayest thou than (quod she) of thylke wretche that lacketh all gooddes/ so that no good nys medled in his wretchednesse/ and yet ouer al his wickednesse/ for which he is a wretch/ that there be yet another yuel aneyed and knyt to hym̄/ shal not men̄ demen̄ hym̄ more vnsely/ than thylke wretche/ of which the vnselynesse is releued by the participacyon of some good: Boece. Why shold he not (quod I) Phi. Than certes (quod she) han shrewes whan they ben̄ punysshed somwhat of good aneyed to hyr shrewdnesse/that is to sayne/ the same payne that they suffren̄/which that is good/ by ꝑ reason of Justyce. And whā thilke same shrewes escapen̄ without tourment/ than haue they sō what more of yuel/ yet ouer the wyckednesse that they han̄ done/ that is to sayn/ defaute of paynes/ whiche defaute of payne thou hast graunted is yuel/ for the deserte of felony. Boece. I ne may not denye it (quod I) Phi. Moche more than (qđ she) ben̄ shrewes vnsely whan they ben̄ wrongfully delyuered fro payne/ than whan they ben̄ punysshed by rygh̄tful vengeaunce. But this is open thyng and clere/ that it is right that shrewes ben̄ punysshed/and it is wyckednesse & wronge that they escapen̄ vnpunisshed. Boece. who myght denye it (quod I) Philoso. But (quod she) may any man̄ deny that al that is right nys good: and also the contrarye/ that al that is wronge is wicked. Boece. Certes (quod I)

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these thynges ben clere ynoughe/ and that we haue concluded a lytell here before. But I pray the that thou tel me yf thou accordest to fynde no tourment to the soules/ after that the body is ended by the dethe/ that is to sayn: vnderstandest thou aught/ that soules haue any tourment after the dethe of the body. Philo: Certes (quod she) ye/ and that ryght great/ of whiche soules (quod she) I trowe that some ben tourmented by asprenesse of payne/ and some soules I trowe ben exercysed by a pourgynge mekenesse/ but my counsayle nys nat to determyne of this paynes. But I haue ymagyned and tolde yet hyderto/ for thou shuldest knowe what the mowynge of shrewes/ whiche mowynge the semeth to be vnworthy/ nys no mowynge/ and ese of shrewes/ of whiche thou playnedest þ they ne were nat punysshed that thou woldest se that they ne weren neuer mo withouten the tourmentes of her wrekednesse. And of the sentence of the mowynge to don pyne/ that thou prayedest þ it myght some be ended/ and that thou woldest sayne lernen that it ne shulde nat longe endure. And that shrewes ben more vnsely yf they were of lenger durynge/ and moost vnsely if they weren perdurable. And after this I haue shewed the/ that more vnsely ben shrewes whan they escapen without her ryghtful payne/ than whan they ben punysshed vp ryghtful vengeaunce. And of this sentence folowyth it/ that thā ben shrewes constrayned at the laste with moost grymous tourment/ whan men wene that they ne be nat punysshed. Boece. Whan I conspyre thy reasons (quod I) I ne trowe nat that men sayn any thynge more verely. And yf I tourne ayen to the studyes of men/ who is he to whom it shulde seme/ that he ne shulde nat vnsely leuen these thynges/ but ese gladly herken hem. Philo. Certes (quod she) so it is/ but ne may nat/ for they haue their eyen so wont to the derknesse of erthely thynges/ that they ne may nat fyxe hem vp to þ light of clere soothfastnesse. But they ben lyke to brides/ of whiche the vpght syghtnyth her lokynges/ and the bey blyndeth hem. For whan men lokyn nat the ordre of thynges/ but her lustes and talentes/ they wene that eyther the lenȝ or the mowynge to done wrekednesse/ or elles the stoppynge without payne be welefull. But conspyre the iugement of the perdurable lawe/ for yf thou cōserue thy courage to the best thynges/ thou ne hast no nede of no Iuge to peuen the pryce or mede/ for thou haste ioyned thy selfe to the moost excellent thinges. And if thou hane enclined thy studies to the wreked thinges/ ne se no forsayne wickery out of thy selfe/ for þ thy selfe hast thrust thy selfe in to wreked thinges/ right as thou mightest lokyn by diuers tymes the soule erthe and the heuen/ and that al other thiges styntyn fro without/ so that thou were in neyther/ ne se nothynge more. Than shulde it semen to the/ as by only reason of lokynge/ that thou were nowe in the sterres and nowe in the erthe/ but the people loketh nat on these thinges. What than/ shal we than approche vs to hem that I haue shewed that ben lyke to beestes? And what woldest thou sayn of this/ if that a man had al forlorne his sight/ & had forgeten þ he euer sawe/ & wened that nothing sayled him of perfection of manhynde? Nowe we whiche mighten sene the same thinges/ wolde we nat sayne that he were blynde/ ne also ne accordeth nat the people to that I shal sayn/ the which thinge is fastened by ay stronge foundementes of reason/ that is to sayn/ that more vnsely ben they that don wronges to other folke/ than they that the wronge suffren. Boe. I wolde herken thilke same reasons (quod I) Phi. Demyst thou (quod she) that al shrewes ne ben worthy to haue tourment? Nay (qđ I) Philo. But (quod she) I am certayne by many reasons/ that shrewes ben vnsely. Boece. It accordeth (quod I) Philo. Than ne demest thou not (quod she) that thilke folke that ben worthy of tourment/ that they ne be wretches. Boece. It accordeth wel (quod I) Philoso. If thou were than seker a iuge or a knower of thinges/ whether trowest thou that men shulde tourmenten hem that hath done wronge/ or elles hem that suffred the wronge? Boece. I doute not (quod I) that I nolde do sufficient satisfaction/ to hem that haue suffred wronge/ by the sorowe of hem that hath doone wronge. Phi. Than semeth it (quod she) that the doer of

wronge is more wretche / than he that suffred wronge. Boece. That folo weth wel (quod I) Philo. Than (quod she) by these causes and by other causes / that ben enforced by the same rote / ꝑ sylth or synne by ꝑ propre nature of it maketh men wretches / ꝙ it sheweth wel / that ꝑ wronges that men don nys nat the wretchednesse of hym that receyueth the wronge / but the wretchednesse of hym that doth ꝑ wrong. But certes (quod she) these oratours or aduocates don all the contrarye / for they enforcen hem to commoue the Juges to haue pyte of hem that don the grenaunces and ꝑ wronges / the whiche shrewes it were a more couenable thinge / that the accusours or aduocates / nat wroth / but pyteous and debonayre ledden tho shrewes that haue don wronges to the iugement / right as men leden syke folke to the leche / for that they shulden sekyn out the maladyes of synne by tourment. And by this couenaunt eyther ꝑ entente of aduocates shulde cessen in al / or els if the office of the aduocates wold better profyten to men / it shulde be tourned in to the habyte of accusacyon / that is to sayn / they shulden accuse shrewes and nat excusen hem. And ese the shrewes hem selfe / if it were leful to hem to sey at any clyste ꝑ vertue that they haue forletten / ꝙ sawen ꝑ they shulde putten adowne the sylthes of her vices by ꝑ tourmentes of paynes / they ne oughten nat eyght for ꝑ recompensacyon / for to geten hem bounte and prowesse / whiche that they haue loste / demen and holde that the yll paynes weren tourmentes to hem / and ese they wolden refuse the attendaunce of her aduocates / and taken hem selfe to her Juges and to her accusours / for the which it betydeth / that as to the wyse folkes / there nys no place yletten to hate / that is to sayn / that hate ne hath no place among wyse men. For no wyght nyl haten good men / but yf he were outer moche a foole / and for to haten shrewes / it nys no reason / for right as langurysshynge is malady of body / right so ben vyces and synne maladye of corage. And so as we ne deme nat ꝑ they which that ben syke of her body / ben worthy to ben hated / but rather worthy of pyte. Wel more worthy nat to ben hated / but for to ben had in pyte ben they / of whiche the thoughtes ben so straynes by felonous wyckednesse / ꝑ is more cruel than any langurysshynge of body.

Quid tantos tuuat excitare motus / Et propria fatum sollicitare manu: Si mors tem petitis / propinquat ipsa Sponte sua volucres nec remoratur equos. ꝛc.

What delyteth you to excyten so grete mournynge of hatredes / and to hasten and busyen the fatal dysposycyon of your dethe with your propre handes / ꝑ is to sayn / by batayles or contekes: For if ye ayen the deth / it hasteth hym of his owne wyl / ne dethe ne taryeth nat his swyfte horse. And the men that the serpentes / and the lyon / and the tygre / and the beere / and the boor / seken to sleen with theyr tethe / yet thilke same men seken to sleen euerych of hem other with swerde. Lo / for her maners ben dyuers and desordaunt / they mouen vnryghtful hostes ꝙ cruel batayles / and wylnen to perysshe by entrechaungynge of dartes / but the reason of crudelte nys nat ynough rightful. Wylte thou thilke men / a couenable guerdon to the desertes of men: loue tryghtfully good folkes / and haue pyte on shrewes.

Hinc ego video inꝯ / que sit vel felicitas vel miseria in ipsis proborum atq; improborum meritis constituta. Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari. ꝛc.

This I se wel (quod I) eyther what blysfulnesse / or els what vnselynesse is establisshed in the desertes of good men and of shrewes. But in this yll fortune of ꝑ people I se somwhat of good / and somwhat of yuel. For no wyse man had not leuer be exyled poore and nedy / and namelesse / than for to dwellen in his eyte / and flouren of eyghtes / and be redoutable of honour / and strenght of power. For in this wise more clerely and vnpenessully is the office of wyse men treated / than the blysfulnesse of power / and governaunce / as it

as it were sheddc amonges the people/that be myghtyours and subiectes/sythe that namely poyson/ sawe/ and these other tourmentes of lawful papines/be rather owed to felonous cytyzyns: for the whiche felonous cytezyns the payues be establysshed/ more than for good people. B. Than I merueyle greatly (qđ I) why that the thynges be so myssse entrechaunged/ that tourmentes of felonyes pressen and confounden good people/ and shewes rauisshen medes of vertue/ & ben in honoures and great estates. And I desyre the for to wetyn of the/what semeth the to be the reason of this so wrongful a conclusyon. For I wold wonder wel the lasse/if I trowed that al thynges were medled with fortunous hap. But now we espeth and encreaseth myn astonyenges god gouernour of thynges/ that so as god yeueth ofte tymes to good men goodes and myrthes/ and to shrewes pucls and aspre thynges: and semeth ayen to good folke hardnesse/ and to shrewes he graunteth hem her wyl/ and that they despeyn. What differnce may there be bytwene that that god dothe/ and happe of fortune/ if men knowe not the cause why it is. Philo. Ne it is no merueyle (qđ she) though that men wenen/that there be somwhat confusyon and confuse/whan the reason of the ordre is vnknowen: but although that thou ne knowe not the cause of so great a disposycyon/ Nathelesse/for as moche as god the good gouernour attempreth & gouerneth ỹ worlde/ne doute the not but al thynges ben don aright.

Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit. Wergatq; ictus equare flammas. Propinqua fumma tardine labi. Cũ nimis celeres expleat ordo Cur legat tardo plaustra Bootes. &c.

So so that knowe not the sterres of Arcture/ turned to ỹ sourrayn centre or poynte/ that is to sayne/ tourned vpryght to the sourrayne pole of the fyrmament/ and note not why the sterre Bootes passeth ouerthwert his wayues/ and deseseth his late semblee in the est/ and why that Bootes the sterre vnfoldeth his ouerswyfte arysynges/ than shal he wondren of the lawe of the hyghe ayre. And eke/ if that he ne knowe not why that the hornes of the ful moone wayen pale and infecte/ by the boundes of the derke nyght/ and how the moone derke and confuse/ discouereth the sterres that she had courted by her clere vysage. The comune erroure mouetli folkes and maketh wery her basyns of brasse by thilke strokes/that is to sayn/ that there is a maner people that hight Coubantes/that wenen that whan the moone is in the eclypse that it be enchaunted/and therfore for to rescue the moone/ they beaten her basyns with thylke strokes. Ne no man ne wondreth whan the blastes of the wynde Thous/ beten the stronde of the see/ by quakyng flodes. Ne no man ne wondreth whan the weight of the snowe/ harded by the colde/ is resolued by the brennyng heate of Phebus the sonne/ for here semen redily the causes. But the causes yhydde/ that is to sayne in heuen/ troubleu the bresties of men. The mouable people is astonyed of al thinges that comen selde and sodaynly in our age/ but the troubly errour of our ignorance departeth fro vs/so ỹ if they wysten the cause why that suche thynges betyden/ certes they shulden cease to seme wonders.

Ita est inq. Sed cum tui muneris sit latentium rerum causas euoluere/ delatasq; caligine explicare rationes: queso vti hinc decernas. &c.

Thus it is (quod I) but so as thou hast peuen or bytaught me to vnwrappe the hydde causes of thynges/ and to discouer me the reasons couered with derkenesse/ I praye the/that thou deuyse and ingre me of this mater/ and that thou do me to vnderstande it/ for this myracle of this wondre troubleth me right greatly. And than she a lytel what smylynge sayd. Thou dispesest me (quod she) to tel that is greatest of al thynges/that men wen ben asked/ and to the which question vneth is there aught ynough to sauey it/ as who sayth/ vneth is there any thyng

thinge to answere perfetely to thy questyon/ for the mater of it is suche/that whan o doute is determyned and cutte awaye/ there wayen other doutes without nombre/ right as the heedes of Idre the serpent wayen/ the whiche serpent Hercules slough: ne there ne were no manere ne none ende/ but if a wight confirayned the doutes/ by a right syuely and quicke syre of thought/ that is to sayne/ by bygour and strength of wytte. For in this mater men weren wonte to maken questyons of the symplicite of the purueyaunce of god/ and of ỹ ordre of destyne/ & of sodeyne hap/ & of knowing of predestynacyon dyuyne. And of the lyberte of frewyl/ the whiche thynges thou thy selfe appercyuedest wel/ of what weyght they ben. But for as moche as the knowynges of these thynges is a maner porcyon or medycine to the/ al be it so that I haue lytel tyme to doone it/ yet neuertheless I wolde enforcen me to shewen somwhat of it: but al though the notrisshynges of dyte of musike delyteth the/ thou muste suffren and forbearen a lytel of thylke delyte/ whyle that I weue to the resons knytte by ordre. Bo. As it lyketh to the (qõ I) so do. Philo. Tho spake she right as by another begynnynge/ and sayd right thus. The engendring of al thynges (quod she) and al the progressions of mouable nature/ and al that moueth in any maner/ taketh his causes/ his ordre and his fourmes/ of the stableneste of diuyne thought: And thylke diuyne thought that is set and put in the toure/ that is to sayne/ in the heyght of the symplycite of god/ stablysseth many maner gyses to the thynges that ben to done/ the whiche maner whan that men loken it/ in the pure clennesse of the diuyne intellygence/ is cleaped purueyaunce. But whan thylke maner is referred by men/ to thynges that it moueth or disponeth/ than of olde men it was cleped destenye/ the whiche thynges/ if that any wight loketh wel in his thought/ the strength of that one and of that other/ he shal lyghtly mowe sene/ that these two thynges ben diuers. For pourueyaunce is thilke diuyne trasoy/ that is establysshed in the souerayne prince of thynges/ the whiche pourueyaunce disponeth al thynges. But certes destynye is the disposycion and the ordynaunce dyuynge ỹ mouable thynges/ by the whiche disposycion the pourueyaunce knytteth al thynges in her ordre: For pourueyaunce embraceth al thynges to heape/ al though they be diuers/ and al though they be infinite/ but destinye certayne departeth and ordayneth al thynges synguleryly/ and deuydeth in mouyng/ in places/ in formes/ and in tymes/ as thus: Let the vnfoldynge of temporal ordynaunce assembled and oned in the lokynge of the diuyne thought be cleaped pureueyaunce/ and thylke same assemblynge and onynge deuyded and vnfolden/ lette that be called destinye. And al be it so that these thynges ben diuers/ yet neuertheless hanged that one ay that other/ for why/ the ordre destynable procedeth of the symplicite of pureueyaunce. For right as a werkeman perceyueth in his thought/ ỹ forme of a thynge that he wol make/ and moueth the effecte of the werke/ and leadeth that he had loked before in his thought symply and presently by corporal ordynaunce: certes right so god in his pureueyaunce disponeth synguleryly and stably/ the thynges that be to done/ but he administreth in maners and in diuers tymes by destenye/ thilke same thinges that he hath disponed/ than whether destenye be exercysed cyther by some diuyne spirites/ seruantes to the diuyne pureueyaunce/ or els by some soule/ or els by al nature serupnge to god/ or els by the celestyal mouynges of sterres/ or els by the vertue of angels/ or els by diuers subtyltie of deuels/ or els by any of hem/ or els by hem al/ the destynable ordynaunce is wouen and accõplissshed. Certes it is open thyng that the pourueyaunce is an vnmouable and symple fourme of thynges to doone/ and the mouable bonde and the temporal ordynaunce of thynges/ whiche that the diuyne symplicite of pourueyaunce hath ordayned to done/ that is destenye. For whiche it is that al thynges that ben put vnder destenye/ ben certes subiectes vnto pourueyaunce/ to whiche pourueyaunce destenye it selfe is subiecte and vnder: but some thinges ben put vnder pureueyaunce that surmounten the ordynaunce of destenye: And tho ben thylke that stablye ben fyxed

nygh

vnyte to the firste godhed/ they surmounten the ordre of destynables mouablyte. For right as cercles turnen aboute a same centre or aboute a poynte/ thilke cercle that is innerest or most within/ he ioyneth to the symplesse of the myddel/ & is as it were a centre or a poynte to that other cercles/ that tournen about hym: and thilke that is vtterest/ compassed by a larger emplonnyng/ is vnfolde by larger spaas/ in somoche as it is fartherest fro the myddelest symplycite of the poynte. And if there be any thyng that vnyteth and schoushyppeth hem selfe to thylke myddle poynte/ it is constrayned in to symplycite/ that is to saye/ in to immouablite/ and it ceaseth to ben shadde and flyte dyuersly. Right so by semblable reason/ thilke thynge that departeth furtherest fro the firste thought of god/ it is vnfolden and also empted to greater bondes of destyne/ and in so moche is the thynge more free and loce fro dignyte/ as it aseeth and holdeth nerre to thylke centre of thynges/ that is to sayne/ to god. And if the thyng cleaueth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of god/ & be without mouynge/ certen it surmounteth the necessyte of destynye. Than suche comparyson as is sprlyng to vnderstandynge/ and of thynge that was engendred to thing that is of tyme to eternyte/ and of the cercle to the centre/ right so is the ordre of mouable destyne/ to the stable symplycite of purueyaunce. Thilke ordynaunce moueth the heuen and the sterres/ and attempreth the elementes togyder amonge hem selfe/ and transformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacion. And thilke same ordre reneweth ayen althynges growyng and fallyng adowne/ by semblable progressions of sedes and of seyus/ that is to sayne/ male and female: and this fyue ordre constrayneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bonde of causes/ not able to be vnbounden: the whiche destynable causes whan they passen out fro the begynnynges of Immouable purueyaunce/ it mote nedes be that they ne be not mutable/ as thus: De the thynge wel gouerned/ if that the symplicite dwelleth in the deuyne thought/ sheweth forthe the ordre of causes vnable to be bowed. And this ordre constrayneth by the propre stablyte the mouable thynges/ or elles they shulden flete folisly. For whyche it is/ that thynges semen confuse and troublye to vs men/ for we ne mowen not conspdet thilke ordynaunce. Neuertheles/ the propre maner of euery thyng/ dresseynge hym to good disponeth hem all/ for there nys nothyng done for yuel/ for thilke thynge that is done by wicked folke/ nys not done for yuel. The whyche shrewes/ as I haue shewed ful plenteously sche good/ but wicked errour misturneth hem/ ne the ordre comyng fro the poynte of souerayne good/ ne enclyneth not fro his begynnyng. But thou mayste saye/ what vnresl may ben a worse cõfusyon/ than that good men haue somtyme aduersyte/ and somtyme prosperyte: and shrewes haue now we also thynges that they desyren/ and now thynges that they haten. Whether men syue now we in suche holynesse of thought/ as who sayth/ be men now we so wyse/ that suche folke as they deemen to be good folke or shrewes/ that it mote nedes be/ þ folke be such as they weneny: But in this maner domes of men disordeyn/ that thylke men that some folke demen worthy of mede/ other folke deme hem worthy of tourment/ but let vs graunt: I suppose that some may may wel deme or knowe the good people and the badde/ may he than knowe & se thilke innerest attemperance of corage/ as it hath be wonte to be sayde of bodyes/ as who sayth I may a man spellen of complexions & attemprailce of bodies/ ne it ne is not/ as who sayth/ but it is sylle a marueyle or a myracle to hem that ne knowen it not/ why that swete thinges be couenable to some bodies that ben hole/ & to some people bytter thiges be couenable: & also why some people ben holpen with sight medicines/ and some people ben holpen with bytter medecines: but natheles the that knowen the maner & the attemprailce of heale and of maladie/ ne merueyleth it nothyng. But what other thyng semeth helth of corages but bonte: and what other thig semeth maladie of corage but vices: Who is elo kepet of good & dunet a way of yuel/ but god the gouernour and feder of thoughtes: the whiche god/ whan he hath beholden from the hygh toure of his pourueyaunce/ he knoweth what is conenable to euy wight/

wight/ and leaueth hem that he wote wel that is rouenable to hem. Lo/ herof cometh & herof is doone this myracle of the ordre destynable/ whan god that al knoweth dothe suche thyng/ of whiche thyng vnknowynge folke ben astonyed/ but for to constrayne/ as who sayth/ but for to comprehende and tel a fewe thynges of the dyuine depenesse/ the whiche that mannes reason maye vnderstande. Thilke may that thou weneste to ben right iuste & right keppynge of equite/ the contrarye of that semeth to the dyuine purueyaūce that al wote. And Lucan my famplier telleth/ that the victorious cause lyked to the goddes/ and the causes ouercome lyketh to Caton. Thanne what so euer thou mayste sene þ is done in this worlde vnhoped or els vnknowen/ certes it is the right ordre of thynges/ but as to thy wicked opynion/ it is a confusyon. But I suppose that some may be so wel thewed/ that the diuyne iugement & the iugement of mankynde accorden hem togyther of hym: but he is so vnstedfaste of corage/ that if any aduersyte come to hym/ he wol forleten peraventure to conkynue innocencie/ by the whiche he ne may not withholden fortune: than the wyse dispēsacion of god spareth hym/ the whiche may aduersite nught enpayren/ for that god wyl not hym to trauayle/ to whome that trauayle nys not conuenable. An other man is parfyte in al vertues/ and is an holy man and nyghe to god/ so that the pouruey-aunce of god wold deme/ that it were a felony that he were touched with any aduersytees/ so that he wol not suffre/ that such a mā be with any bodily maladye moued. But so (as sayd the philosophre) the more excellent is by me sayde in great/ that vertues haue edifyed the body of the holy man. And ofte tyme it betydeth/ that the lyuyng of thinges that ben to done is tobey to gouerne to good folke/ for that the malyce haboundaunt of shrewes shulde ben abated. And god peueth and departeth to other folke prosperytees and aduersytees medled to heape/ after the qualyte of her corages/ and remordeth some folke by aduersytees/ for they ne shulde not wayen prowde by longe welefulnesse. And other folke he suffreth to be trauayled with harde thynges/ for that they shulde conferme the vertues of corage/ by the exercitation of vsage of pacyence. And other folke diedeth more than they oughten/ þ whiche they myghten wel beaten/ and some despyse that they mowe not beare/ and thilke folke god leadeth in to experience of hem/ as by aspre and forouful thynges. And many other folke haue bought honourable renome of this worlde/ by the price of glorious deth. And some men that ne mowe not ben ouercomen by tourment/ haue peuen ensample to other folke/ that vertue maye not ben ouercomen by aduersytes. And of al these thynges there nys no doute/ that they ne ben done rightfully and ordaynly/ to the parfyt good of hem/ to whome we sene these thynges betyde. For certes that aduersytees cometh somtyme to shrewes/ and somtyme that they ben pryed/ it cometh of these forsayd causes. And of forouful thynges that betyden to shrewes certes no man ne wondreth/ for al men wote that they haue deserued it/ and that they ben of wicked meryte. Of whiche shrewes the tourmente agasteth somtyme other to doone forsoupes: and somtyme it amendeth hem that suffreth the tourmentes. And the prosperyte that is peuen to shrewes/ sheweth a great argumente to good people/ what thynge they shulde demen of thylke welfulnesse/ whiche prosperyte may sene ofte serue to shrewes: In whiche thing I trowe that god dispenseth/ for peraventure þ nature of some man is so ouer thin o wynge to yuel and so vnconuenable/ that the nedy poucrte of his housholde might rather agreue hym to done felonyes/ and to the maladye of hym god puttieth remedie to punysshe hym rychesse. And some other man beholdeth his conscience defouled with synnes/ and wayeth comparyson of this fortune and of hys selfe/ and dredeth peraventure that the welfulnesse/ of whiche the vsage is noyful to hym/ that the lesyng of thylke welfulnesse ne be not forouful to hym/ and therfore he wolde chaunge his maneres: and for he dredeth to lese the fortune/ he forleteth his wickednesse. To other folkes welfulnes is peuen vnwarely/ the whiche ouerthrowyth hem in to destruccyon that they han deserued/ and to some other folkes peuen

penny pe wer to punysshen / for that it shal be cause of contynuatyon & exercysyng to good folkes / and cause of turment to shrewes. For yf as there were none alyaunce bytwene good folkes and shrewes / ne shrewes ne myght not endure among hem selfe: and why not? For that shrewes be contrarye of hem selfe by her wyse / the whyche wyse al to rendeth her consistence / and done oft tyme thynges / the whyche thynges whan they haue done hem / they deme that the thynges ne shulde not haue be done / for whyche thyng the soueraync purueyaunce hath maked oft tyme impartel: so that shrewes haue maked shrewes to ben good men. For whan that some shrewes sene that they suffre wrongfully felonyes of other shrewes / they wexen eschaufed in to hate of hem that anoyed hem / and retourne to the fruite of vertue. Than they studyen to be vnlyke to hem that they haue hated. Lerne onely in this the tyme myght / to the whyche myght yuele ben than good / whan it vseth the yuele couenably / and draweth out the effecte of any good: as who sayth / that yuel is good onely to the myght of god / for the myght of god ordeyneth thilke yuel to good: For one ordre embraceth al thynges / so that what myght departeth from the reason of thylke ordre that is assigned to hem / algates yet he slydeth in to another ordre / so that nothyng is lefful to folye in the realme of thayne purueyaunce / as who sayth / nothyng is without ordynaunce in the realme of thayne purueyaunce / syth that the right stronge god gouerneth al thynges in this worlde / for it is not lefful for men to comprehende by wyt ne vnfolden by worde al the subtyl ordynaunce and the disposicion of the thayne entent / for only it ought it suffyse to haue lerned that god thay selfe maker of al natures / ordeyneth al thynges to good / whyle that he hasteth to withlede the thynges that he hath maked in to his semblaunce / that is to say / for to withholden the thynges in to good / for hem selfe is good. He chaseth out al yuele fro the bounde of his empyalties / by the ordre of the necessyte desyrable: for whyche it folowyth / that yf thou loke the purueyaunce / ordeynyng the thynges that may seme be contrarious or hateful

bounte in erthes / thou shalt not sene in no place no thynge of yuel. But I se nowe that thou arte charged with the weyght of the questyons / and wery with length of my reason / and that thou alydest some swetenesse of songe / take than this draught / and whan thou arte wel refressched & reserte / thou shalt be more stedfaste to stye in to hyghe questyons or thynges.

Si bis celsi intra tonantis. Pura foleris terminet mente Aspice lumi culmina celsi.

If thou wyse wolte demen in thy pure thought / the rightes or the lawes of the hye thonder / that is to sayn of god / loke thou and beholde the heightes of the soueraync heuen: There kepen the sterres by rightful alyaunce of thynges her olde peace: The Sonne ymoued by his roody fyre / ne disflourtheth nat the colde cercle of the moone / ne the sterre pele ped the Dere / that enclyneth his ranysshynge courses / aboutey the soueraync heyght of this worlde. Ne the same sterre Vrsa / nys neuer mo wasshen i ȳ depe westren see / ne coueyteth nat to depeyn his flambey in the see of the Occian / al though it se other sterres yplonged in the see: And Hesperus the sterre boodeth and telleth alwaye the late nyghtes: and Lucyfer the sterre bringeth ayen the clere daye. And thus maketh loue enterchaungeable / the perdurable course / and thus is discordable vnlyke ysayle ypput out of the countrey of the sterres. This accordance stempreth by cupulyke maners the Elementes / that the moyst thynges seruynge with the drye thynges / peuen place by stoundes: and that the colde thynges ioyneny hem by sayth to the hote thynges / & that the sygbt fyre aryseth in to height / and the heuy erthes aualey by her weyghtes: by ȳ same causes the flowry yere yeldeth swete smelles / in the first somer season warmynge / and the hote somer dryeth the cornes / and Autumpne cometh ayen heuy of apples / and the sterynge rayne bedeweth the wynter / this attemperaunce nourysseth & bringeth forth al thynges that liueth lyse in this worlde / and thylke same at temperaunce rauissyng / hideth / benymeth / and diecheth vnder the last deth al thynges yborne.

Amonge

wight/ and leaueth hem that he wote wel that is rouenable to hem. Lo/ herof cometh & herof is doone this myracle of the ordre destynable/ whan god that al knoweth dothe suche thyng/ of whiche thyng vnknowynge folke ben astonyed/ but for to confirayne/ as who sayth/ but for to comprehende and tel a fewe thynges of the dyuine depenesse/ the whiche that mannes reason maye vnderstande. Thilke may that thou weneste to ben right iuste & right keppynge of equite/ the contrarye of that semeth to the dyuine purueyaūce that al wote. And Lucan my famplier telleth/ that the victorious cause lyked to the goddes/ and the causes ouercome lyketh to Caton. Thanne what so euer thou mayste sene ỳ is done in this worlde vnhoped or els vnknowen/ certes it is the right ordre of thynges/ but as to thy wicked opynion/ it is a confusyon. But I suppose that some may be so wel thewed/ that the diuyne iugement & the iugement of manlynde accorden hem togyther of hym: but he is so vnstedfaste of corage/ that if any aduersyte come to hym/ he wol forleten peraventure to conkynne innocence/ by the whiche he ne may not withholden fortune: than the wyse dispēsacion of god spareth hym/ the whiche may aduersite myght empayren/ for that god wyl not him to trauayle/ to whome that trauayle nys not conuenable. Ay other man is parfyte in al vertues/ and is an holy man and nyghe to god/ so that the pouruey-aunce of god wold deme/ that it were a felony that he were touched with any aduersytees/ so that he wol not suffre/ that such a mā be with any bodily maladye moued. But so (as sayd the philosophre) the more excellent is by me sayde in great/ that vertues haue edifyed the body of the holy man. And ofte tyme it betydeth/ that the sōme of thinges that ben to done is taken to gouerne to good folke/ for that the malyce haboundaunt of shrewes shulde ben abated. And god peneth and departeth to other folke prosperytees and aduersytees medled to heape/ after the qualyte of her corages/ and remordeth some folke by aduersytees/ for they ne shulde not wayten prowde by longe welefulnesse. And other folke he suffreth to be trauayled with harde thynges/ for that they shulde conferme the vertues of corage/ by the exercitacion of vsage of pacyence. And other folke dredeth more than they oughten/ ỳ whiche they myghten wel beaten/ and some dispyse that they mowe not hearte/ and thilke folke god leadeth in to experience of hem self by aspre and sorouful thynges. And many other folke haue bought honourable renome of this worlde/ by the pure of glorious dethe. And some men that ne mowe not ben ouercomen by tourment/ haue peuen ensample to other folke/ that vertue maye not ben ouercomen by aduersytees. And of al these thynges there nys no doute/ that they ne ben done rightfully and ordaynly/ to the parfyte good of hem/ to whome we sene these thynges betyde. For certes that aduersytees cometh some tyme to shrewes/ and somtyme thei ben spared/ it cometh of these forsayd causes. And of sorouful thynges that betyden to shrewes/ certes no man ne wondreth/ for al men wote that they haue deserued it/ and that they ben of wikked merite. Of whiche shrewes the tormente agasteth somtyme other to doone felonyes: and somtyme it amendeth hem that suffreth the tourmentes. And the prosperyte that is peuen to shrewes/ sheweth a great argumente to good people/ what thynge they shulde demen of thilke welfulnesse/ whiche prosperyte men sene ofte serue to shrewes: In whiche thing I trowe that god dispenseth/ for peraventure ỳ nature of some man is so ouerthrowynge to yuel and so vncommunable/ that the nedy pouerte of his housholde myght rather agreue hym to done felonyes/ and to the maladye of hym god putteth remedie to yeuen hym rychesse. And some other man beholdeth his conscience defouled with synnes/ and wayleth comparyson of this fortune and of hym selfe/ and dredeth peraventure that the welfulnesse/ of whiche the vsage is ioyful to hym/ that the lesyng of thilke blisfulnesse ne be not sorouful to hym/ and therfore he wolde chaūge his maneres: and for he dredeth to lese his fortune/ he forleteth his wickednesse. To other folkes welfulnes is peuen vnworthely/ the whiche ouerthrowen hem in to destruccyon that they han deserued/ and to some other folkes peuy

yeuen power to punysshen / for that it shal be cause of contynuynge & encreasynge to good folkes / and cause of tourment & shrynge. For so as there nys none alyaunce betwene good folkes and shrewes / ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden among hem selfe: and why not? For that shrewes discorden of hem selfe by her vyces / the whiche vyces al to crueden her conscyences / and done oft tyme thynges / the whiche thynges whan they have done hem / they deme that the thynges ne shulde not have be done / for whiche thyng the soueraine purueyaunce hath maked oft tyme myracle: so that shrewes sone maked shrewes to ben good men. For whan that some shrewes sene that they suffre wongfully felonyes of other shrewes / they weyen eschaufed in to hate of hem that anoyed hem / and retourneden to the fruite of vertue. Than they studyen to be vnlyke to hem that they have hated. Certes onely is this the lyuynge myght / to the whiche myght yuels ben than good / whan it vseth the yuels couenably / and draweth out the effecte of any good / as who sayth / that yuel is good onely to the myght of god / for the myght of god ordeyneth thilke yuel to good: For one ordre embraceth al thynges / so that what myght departeth from the reason of thylke ordre that is assigned to hem / algates yet he slydeth in to another ordre / so that nothyng is lesful to folye in the realme of thayne purueyaunce / as who sayth / nothyng is without ordynaunce in the realme of thayne purueyaunce / seth that the right stronge god gouerneth al thynges in this worlde / for it is not lesful for men to comprehende by wyt ne vnfolden by worde al the subtyl ordynaunce and the disposicion of the thayne entent / for only it ought to suffyse to have loked that god hym selfe / maker of al natures / ordeyneth al thynges to good / whyle that he hasteth to withholde the thynges that he hath maked vnto his semblaunce / that is to say / for to withholden the thynges vnto good / for he hym selfe is good. He chaseth out al yuels fro the bounde of his compaignie / by the ordre of the necessyte desyrable: for whiche it folweth / that if thou loke the purueyaunce / ordeynyng the thynges that may nowen be contrarious or habonndaunt in erthes thou shalt not sene in no place no thynge of yuel. But I se nowe that thou arte charged with the weight of the questyon / and wery with length of my reason / and that thou abydest some sweetnesse of sauge: take then this draught / and whan thou arte wel refressshed & refect / thou shalt be more stedfaste to stye vnto hyghere questyons or thynges.

Si bis celli iura tenantis. Pura foleris
cernere mente. Aspice lumen culmenq; celi.

IF thou wyse woste demen in thy pure thought / the rightes or the lawes of the hye thonder / that is to sayn of god / loke thou and beholde the heightes of the soueraine heuen: There kepen the sterres by right ful ayreaunte of thynges her olde peace: The Sonne ymoued by his roody fyre / ne disflourheth nat the colde cercle of the moone / ne the sterre pele ped the Dere / that enclyneth his rauysshynge courses / aboutey the soueraine height of this worlde. Ne the same sterre Vrsa / nys neuer mo wasshen in ye depe westren see / ne coueyteth nat to depen hir flaumbes in the see of the Occian / al though it se other sterres yplonged in the see: And Hesperus the sterre boodeth and telleth alwaye the late nyghtes: and Lucyfer the sterre bryngeth ayen the clere daye. And thus maketh soue enterchaungeable / the perdurable courses / and thus is discordable bataple ypput out of the countrey of the sterres. Thilke accordance atempreth by cupulyke maneres the Elementes / that the mayst thynges fyrynge with the drye thynges / yeuen place by stoundes: and that the colde thynges ioynen hem by fayth to the hote thynges / & that the lyght fyre aryseth in to height / and the heuy erthes aualeth by her weightes: by ye same causes the flourysshynge yere yeldeth swete smelles / in the first somer season warmynge / and the hote somer dryeth the cornes / and Autumpne cometh ayen heuy of apples / and the fletynge rayne bedeweth the wynter / this attemperaunce nourysseth & bryngeth forth al thynges that bereth lyfe in this worlde / and thylke same attemperaunce rauissshing / hideth / beraymeth / and duelleth vnder the last deth al thinges yborne.

Amonge

Amonges these thynges sytteth the highe maker/ kynge and lorde/ welle and begynnynge/ lawe & wyse iuge/ to done equite/ & gouerneth & enclyneth the bridels of thynges: And the thynges that he sterreth to gone by mouynge/ he withdraweth and arresteth/ and appruueth the mouable or wandrynge thynges. For if þ he ne called nat ayen the right goyng of thynges. And if that he ne cõstrayned hem nat eft sones in to roundnesses enclyned/ the thynges that ben nowe cõtynued by stable ordynance/ they shulde departen from her welle/ that is to sayn from her begynnyng and fallen/ that is to sayne/ tourney in to nought. This is the cõmune loue to al thynges: and al thynges aseen to ben holden by the fyne of good/ for els ne myghten they nat lasten/ if they ne cõe nat eftsones ayen by loue retourned to þ cause þ hath yeuen hem beyng/ þ is to sayn god.

Iam ne igitur vides quid hec omnia que dirimus cõsequantur. Quid nam inquit. Omnem inquit. &c.

Seyst thou nat than/ what thyng foloweth al the thynges that I haue sayd. B. What thyng (qõ I) P. Certes (qõ she) al utterly/ that al fortune is good. B. And howe moye that be (qõ I. P. Nowe vnderstande (qõ she) So as al fortune/ whether so it be ioyful fortune or aspre fortune/ is yeuen either bycause of guerdonyng/ or els of exercysyng of good folkes/ or els bycause to punysshen/ or els chastysen shrewes: Than is al fortune good/ the which fortune is certayne/ that it be either rightful/ or els profytable. Bo. Forsoth this is a ful very reason (qõ I) And if I consyder the purueyaunce and the desyne that thou taughtest me a lytel here beforn/ this sentẽce is sustayned by stedfast reasons. But if it lyke vnto the/ lette vs nombren hem amonges thylke thynges/ of whiche thou saydest a lytel here beforne/ that they ne were nat able to ben wened to the people. P. Why so (qõ she). B. For that the cõmune worde of men (qõ I) mysuseth this maner speche of fortune/ and sayne ofte tymes/ that the fortune of some wight is wicked. P. Wylt thou than (qõ she) that I aproche a lytel to þ wordes of the people/ so that it seme nat to hem/ that I be ouer mocke depted/ as fro the vsage of mankynde. B. As thou wolte (qõ I). P. Weneste thou not (qõ she) that al thynge that profyteth is good. B. Yes (qõ I) Phi. Certes al thynge that exerceth or exerseth/ it profyteth. Bo. I confesse wel (qõ I) Phi. Than is it good (qõ she) Bo. Why not (qõ I) Phi. But this is the fortune (quod she) of hem that eyther be put in vertue/ and bataylen ayenst aspre thinges/ or els of hem that enclynen and declynen fro vices/ and taken the way of vertue. Bo. This ne may I not denye (quod I) Phi. But what sayest thou of the mery fortune that is yeuen to good people in guerdon/ demeth aught the people that it be wicked? B. Nay forsothe (quod I) but they demen as it is soth/ that it is right good. Phi. What sayest thou of the other fortune (quod she) that al thoughe that it be aspre and restrayneth the shrewes by rightful turment/ weneth aught the people that it be good? B. Nay (quod I) But the people demeth that it is most wretched of al thynges that may be thought. P. Wate nowe and lose wel (quod she) leste we in folowynge the oppinyon of the people/ haue confessed and concluded thynge whiche that is vnable to ben wened to the people. Bocce. What is that (qõ I) P. Certes (qõ she) it foloweth or cometh of thynges that ben granted/ that al fortune what so euer it be/ of hem that ben eyther in possessyon of vertue/ or in the encrease of vertue/ or els in the purchasyng of vertue/ that thylke fortune is good/ & that al fortune is right wycked to hem that dwellen in shrewednesse/ as who saithe/ and thus weneth nat the people. B. That is soth (qõ I) Al be it so that no man dare confesse it/ ne knowe it. P. Why so (qõ she) For ryght as the stronge man ne semeth nat to abaisshen or disdayneth/ as oft tyme as he sterreth the noyse of the batayle: Ne also it semeth not to þ wise man to beaten it grenously/ as ofte as he is ledde in to stryfe of fortune. For bothe to that one may and ebe to that other/ thilke difficulte is the mater to that one man of encrease of his glorious renome/ and to that other man to

confirme

mistrue his seppente/ that is to saye/ to the ydymesse of his estate/ for therfore is it called vertue/ for that it susteyneth and enforceth by his strengthes/ so that it nye not ouercomen by aduersytees. Ne trust thou that arte put in exersise or in the heyght of vertue/ ne hast not mester to flatten with despere/ and for to waste ny bodily lustes. Thou sowest or plantest a ful eygre watayle in thy corage ayenst euery fortune: For that the sorouful fortune confounde the not/ ne that the merry fortune ne corrumpe the not/ ocrupe the meane by stedfast strengthes. For al ꝑ euel is vnder the meane/ or al that ouerpasseth the meane/ desyreth welfulnesse/ as who sayth/ it is vertous/ and at hath no mede of his trauayle/ for it is sette ny pour hande/ as who sayethe/ it lyeth ny pour power what fortune pou is leuest/ ꝑ es to say good or yuel/ for al fortune ꝑ semeth sharpe or egre/ if it ne exercyse not the good folke/ ne chastyse the wicked folke/ it punysseth.

Bella bis denis operatus annis. Vltor trudes phrigierumis. ꝛc.

The werker strides/ ꝑ is to sayne Agamemnon/ that wrought ꝛ contpuned the watayles by ten yere/ recouered and purged ny wedyng/ by the distruction of Troye/ the leste chambres of maryage ny his brother/ that is to saye/ that Agamemnon wan ayen Helayne/ that was Menelaus wyfe/ his brother. In the meane while that thilke Agamemnon was despuid to yeuen sayles to the grekes nauye/ and brought ayen the wyndes by bloode: he vnclothed hym of pyte of father/ and the soure preest yeueth ny sacrifyeng/ the wretched outrage of the throte of the doughter/ that is to say/ that Agamemnon set cutte the throte of his doughter by the preest/ to maken ayeaunce with his goddes/ and for to haue wynde/ with whiche he mighte wenden to Troye. Macus/ that is to say Vlixes/ bewepte his felowes perisshynge/ the whiche felowes the feere Polipheme fyggynge ny his great cane/ had frotten and deuoret ny his empty wombe: But nathelesse Polipheme woode for his thynke bysage plukke Vlixes eye/ by his sorouful terme/ that is to say/ that Vlixes smote out the eye of Polipheme/ that stode ny ꝑ forheed/ for which Vlixes had iope/ whan he sawe Polipheme wepyng and blynde. Hercules is celebrable for his harde trauayle/ he daunted the proude Centaurus/ halfe horse halfe man/ ꝛ diraste the dispoysing fro ꝑ cruel lyon/ that is to say/ he slough the lyon/ and diraste him his skynne. He smote the birdes that hyght Arpyes with certayne arowes. He rauysshed apples fro the waking dragon: and his hande was the more heauy for the golden metal. He dronghe Cerberus the hounde of hell by the triple chaynes. He ouercomen/ as it is sayd/ hath put an vnmeke lorde fodder to his cruel horse/ that is to say/ Hercules slough Dyomedes/ ꝛ made his horse to frette him: and he Hercules sloughe Idra the serpent/ and dreut the venym. And Achelous the floode defouled ny his forheed/ dreput his shamefast vysage ny his frondes/ that is to say/ that Achelous coulde trasfygure him selfe ny to dyuers lykenesse/ ꝛ as he faught with Hercules/ at laste he tourned him ny to a bul/ ꝛ Hercules brake one of his hornes: and he for shame hyd him ny his ryuer. And ouer that he Hercules caste adown Antheus the gyaunt ny the strodes of Lybie. And Cacus appeysed the wrathes of Euander/ that is to say that Hercules slough the monstre Cacus/ and apeysed with that dethe the wrathe of Euander. And the buffled boye marked with bomes the sholdres of Hercules/ the whiche sholdres the eye cercle of heuen shulde thrist. And the last of his labours was/ that he susteyned the heuen vpon his nerke vnbowed/ and he deserued eftsones the heuen to be the last ende of trauayle. Gothe now than ye stronge men there as the gret ensample sedeth you. O nyce men why make ye your backes/ as who saith: o ye slowe ꝛ delycate men/ why se ye aduersytees/ and ne sygh not ayenst hem by vertu/ to wynne the mede of heuen: for the mede ouercomen/ yeueth the sterres/ that is to sayne/ that whan that frelych luste is ouercomen/ a man is maked worthy to the heuen.

Here endeth the fourthe booke of Boece/ ꝛ folowth the fyfthe.

Amonges these thynges sytteth the hyghe maister/ kynge and lorde/ wyse and begynnynge/ lawe & wyse rugge/ to done equite/ & gouerneth & enclyneth the bridels of thynges: And the thynges that he stereth to gone by mouynge/ he withdrawyth and arestyth/ and affermeth the mouable or wandryng thynges. For yf ȳ he ne called nat ayen the right goyng of thynges. And yf that he ne cõstrayned hem nat eftsones in to roundnesses enclyned/ the thynges that ben nowe cõtynued by stable ordynance/ they shulde departen from her wyse/ that is to sayn from her begynnyng and fallen/ that is to sayne/ tourney in to nought. This is the cõmune loue to al thynges: and al thynges asyen to ben holden by the fyne of good/ for els ne myghten they nat lasten/ yf they ne cõe nat eftsones ayen by loue retourned to ȳ cause ȳ hath yeuen hem beyng/ ȳ is to sayn god.

Iam ne igitur vides quid hec omnia que diximus cõsequantur. Quid nam inquit. Omnem inquit. ꝛc.

Seyst thou nat than/ what thyng folowyth al the thynges that I haue sayd. B. What thyng (qõ I) P. Certes (qõ she) al vtterly/ that al fortune is good. B. And howe maye that be (qõ I. P. Howe vnderstande (qõ she) So as al fortune/ whether so it be ioyful fortune or aspre fortune/ is yeuen either bycause of guerdonyng/ or els of exercysyng of good folkes/ or els bycause to punysshen/ or els chastysen shrewes: Than is al fortune good/ the which fortune is certayne/ that it be either rightful/ or els profytable. B. Forsoth this is a ful very reason (qõ I) And yf I consyder the purueyaunce and the destyne that thou taughtest me a lytel here beforn/ this sentẽce is sustayned by stedfast reasons. But yf it lyke vnto the/ lette vs nombren hem amonges thylke thynges/ of whiche thou saydest a lytel here beforne/ that they ne were nat able to ben wened to the people. P. Why so (qõ she). B. For that the cõmune worde of men (qõ I) mysuseth this maner speche of fortune/ and sayne ofte tymes/ that the fortune of some wight is wicked. P. Wylt thou than (qõ she) that I aproche a lytel to ȳ wordes of the people/ so that it seme nat to hem/ that I be ouer moche dexted/ as fro the vsage of mans vnde. B. As thou wolte (qõ I) P. Wenest thou not (qõ she) that al thynge that profyteth is good. B. Yes (qõ I) Phi. Certes al thynge that exercyseth or corrygeth/ it profyteth. Bo. I confesse wel (qõ I) Phi. Than is it good (qõ she) Bo. Why not (qõ I) Phi. But this is the fortune (quod she) of hem that eyther be put in Vertue/ and batayleu ayenst aspre thynges/ or els of hem that enclyneu and declyneu fro vices/ and taken the way of vertue. Bo. This ne may I not denye (quod I) Phi. But what sayest thou of the mery fortune that is yeuen to good people in guerdon/ demeth aught the people that it be wicked: B. Nay forsothe (quod I) but they demen as it is soth/ that it is right good. Phi. What sayest thou of the other fortune (quod she) that al thoughe that it be aspre and restrayneth the shrewes by rightful turment/ weneth aught the people that it be good: B. Nay (quod I) but the people demeth that it is most wicched of al thynges that may be thought. P. Ware nowe and loke wel (quod she) leste we in folowynge the oppinyon of the people/ haue confessed and concluded thynge whiche that is vnable to ben wened to the people. Bocr. What is that (qõ I) P. Certes (qõ she) it folowyth or cometh of thynges that ben graunted/ that al fortune what so euer it be/ of hem that ben eyther in possessyon of Vertue/ or in the encrease of Vertue/ or els in the purchasig of Vertue/ that thylke fortune is good/ & that al fortune is right wycked to hem that dwellen in shrewednesse/ as who sayth/ and thus weneth nat the people. B. That is soth (qõ I) Al be it so that no man dare confesse it/ ne knowe it. P. Why so (qõ she) For right as the stronge man ne semeth nat to abasshen or disdayneu/ as ofte tyme as he hereth the noyse of the batayle: Ne also it semeth not to ȳ wyse man to beareu it greuously/ as ofte as he is ledde in to stryfe of fortune. For bothe to that one man and eke to that other/ thilke difficulte is the matere to that one man of encrease of his glorious renome/ and to that other man to

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suffrue his sapyence/ that is to sayg/ to the ignorance of his estate/ for therfore is it called vertue/ for that it susteyneth and enfourceth by his strengthes/ so that it nys not ouertromen by aduersytees. Sir certes thou that arte put in entraste or in the heygte of vertue/ ne hast not nomy to flitten with delyces/ and for to walsen in bodely luste. Thou sowest or plantest a ful cygre batayle in thy corage ayenst euery fortune: for that the sorouful fortune consolde the not/ ne that the merry fortune ne corrumpe the not/ ocrruppe the meane by stedfast strengthes. For al ꝑ euer is vnder the meane/ & al that ouerpasseth the meane/ dispyseth mesuinesse/ as who sayth/ it is vycious/ and it hath no mede of his trauayle/ for it is sette in your handē/ as who sayth/ it syeth in your power what fortune you is lewest/ ꝑ is to say good or yuel/ for al fortune ꝑ semeth sharpe or aspre/ if it ne exercyse not the good folke/ ne chastyse the wicked folke/ it punysseth.

Bella bis binis operatus annis. Ulixes strides phrygiecumis. xc.

The werker atrides/ ꝑ is to sayne Agamemnon/ that wrought & contynued the batayles by ten yere/ stroncred and purged in wasshyng/ by the distruction of Troye/ the loste chambres of maryage in his brother/ that is to saye/ that Agamemnon wan ayen helayne/ that was Menelaus wyfe/ his brother. In the meane while that thilke Agamemnon despyed to yeuen sayles to the grekes nauye/ and brought ayen the wyndes by bloode: he sacrifysed hym of pyte of father/ and the sone pyteful yeueth in sacrifysyng/ the wretched cutlynge of the throte of the doughter/ that is to say/ that Agamemnon let cutte the throte of his doughter by the prestes/ to maken atyaunce with the goddes/ and for to haue wynde/ with whiche he might wenden to Troye. Ulixes/ that is to say Dlixes/ betrapte his felawes ayene/ the whiche felawes the sone Polyphemus fygurynge in his great caue/ had frotten and deuyrt in his emptye wombe: But natheles Polyphemus wooke for his blynde bysage like to Dlixes eye/ by the sorouful terres/ that is to say/ that Dlixes smote out the eye of Polyphemus/ that stode in ꝑ forheed/ for which Dlixes had ioye/ whan he sawe Polyphemus wepping and blynde. Hercules is celebrable for his harde trauayle/ he daunted the proude Centaurus/ halfe horse halfe man/ & braste the dispoyling fro ꝑ cruel lyon/ that is to say/ he slough the lyon/ and biraft him his skynne. He smote the bydes that hyght Arpyes with certayne arowes. He ranssched apples fro the wakyng dragon: and his hande was the more heauy for the golsery metal. He dronghe Cerberus the hounde of hell by the triple chaynes. He ouertromen/ as it is sayd/ hath put an vnmeke lorde fodder to his cruel horse/ that is to say/ Hercules slough Dyomedes/ & made his horse to frette him: and he Hercules slonghe Idra the serpent/ and brent the venym. And Achileus the floode defouled in his forheed/ dreynt his shamfaste vysage in his strondes/ that is to say/ that Achileus coulde trasfygure him selfe in to dyuers lyknesse/ & as he faught with Hercules/ at laste he tourned him in to a bul/ & Hercules braste one of his hornes: and he for shame hyd him in his ryuer. And ouer that he Hercules caste adown Antheus the gyaunt in the strodes of Lybie. And Cacus appeysed the wrathes of Euander/ that is to say that Hercules slough the monstre Cacus/ and apeysed with that dethe the wrathe of Euander. And the bustled bole marked with bones the sholders of Hercules/ the whiche sholders the hye cercle of heuen shulde thrust. And the last of his labours was/ that he susteyned the heuen vpon his nerke vnbowed/ and he deserued eftsones the heuen to be the last ende of trauayle. Gothe now than ye stronge men there as the gret ensample techeth you. O vyce men why make ye your backes/ as who saith: o ye slowe & delycate men/ why se ye aduersytees/ and nr syghe not ayenst hem by vertu/ to wynnen the mede of heuen: for the mede ouertromen/ yeueth the sterres/ that is to sayne/ that whan that erthely lustre is ouertromen/ a man is maked worthy to the heuen.

Here endeth the fourthe booke of Boecius whych yeth the sythe.

¶ Direxat/ oꝛationisq; cursum ad alia quedam tractanda atq; expedienda verteꝛbat. B. Tum ego/ recta quidem inq;. ꝛc.

She had sayd and tourned the courſe of her reaſon to ſome other thinges/ to be treated and to be ſped. B. Than ſaid I/ certes rightful is thyn amoneſting and ful digne by auctoute. But that thou ſapeſt whilom/ that the queſtyon of the deuyne pouruеyaunce/ is enlaced with many other queſtyons/ I vnder ſtande wel and proue it/ by the ſame thinge. But I aſke/ if that thou weneſt ỳ hap be any thynge in any wayes/ and if thou weneſt that hap be any thynge/ what is it? Philo. Than (quod ſhe) I haſte me to yelden and aſſoplen to the det of my beheſt/ and to ſhewen ỽ apen ỳ way/ by whiche way thou mayſt come apen to thy countree: but al be it ſo that the thinges whiche that thou aſkeſt/ ben right profytable to knowe/ yet ben they dyuers/ ſo what fro ỳ path of my purpoſe/ ỽ it is to doute/ that thou ne be maked wery by myſſe wayes/ ſo ỳ thou ne mayſt nat ſuffyſe to meaſure ỳ right way. Boece. Ne doute the therof nothyng (quod I) For for to knowen thilke thiges togider/ in the whiche thinges I delyte me greatly/ that ſhal ben to me in ſtede of reſte/ ſyth it nys nat to douten of the thynges folowynge/ whan euery thig of thy diſputacyon ſhal haue ben fred faſt to me/ by vndoutous ſayth. Phi. Than (ſayd ſhe) that maner wol I done to the/ and began to ſpeaken right thus. Certes (quod ſhe) if any wyght deſmuſſhe hap in thin maner/ that is to ſayn/ ỳ hap is betidynge pbrought forth by folyſſhe mouynge/ ỽ by no knyttynge of cauſes/ I conferme that hap nys right naught in no wyſe/ and I deme al vtterly/ that hap nys/ ne dwelleth but a voyer/ as who ſayth/ but an ydel worde/ without any ſignification of thing cõmitted to that voyer. For what place might ben left or dwellynge in folie and to diſordenaunce/ ſythe that god leadeth and conſtrayneth al thinges by ordre/ for this ſentence is very ſothe/ that nothynge hath his beinge of naught/ to the whiche ſentence/ none of theſe olde folke ne withſayd neuer/ al be it ſo ỳ they ne vnderſtanden it nat/ by god/ prince and begynner of wonynge/ but they caſten/ as a maner foundement of ſubiecte material/ that is to ſayn/ of the nature of al reaſon. And if that any thing is wayt or comen of no cauſes/ than ſhal it ſeme/ that thilke thinge is comen or woxen of naught. But if this ne may nat be done/ than is it nat poſſyble ỳ hap be any ſuche thing/ as I haue deſpuiſſhed a lytel here beforne. Boet. Holde ſhal it than be (quod I) nye there thã nothing that by right may ben cleped cytther hap or aduenture or fortune/ or is there aught/ al be it ſo that it is hyd fro ỳ people/ to which thing theſe wordes ben couenable: Phi. Tyme Ariſtotle (quod ſhe) in the boke of his phyſike/ deſmuſſheth this thinge by ſhorte reaſon/ ỽ nigh to the ſoth. Boet. In which maner (quod I) P. As ofte (quod ſhe) as men done any thing for grace of any other thing/ ỽ another thinge thã thilke thing that men entenden to don betydeth by ſome cauſes/ it is yeleped hap/ right as a man dalfe the erthe bycauſe of tyllynge of ỳ felde/ and founde there a gobet of golde beden/ than weneth ſelfe that it is befal by fortunous betydynge. But forſothe it nys nat of naught/ for it hath his propre cauſes/ of which cauſes ỳ courſe vnforſeyn ỽ vnware/ ſemeth to haue maked hap. For if the tyller of ỳ felde ne dolue nat in ỳ erthe/ and if the hyder of the golde ne had hyd the golde in that place/ the golde ne had not ben founde. Alſo ben thay the cauſes of ỳ abredgynge of fortune hap/ the whiche abredgynge of fortune hap cometh of couſes of encountrynge and flowynge togyder to hem ſelfe/ and nat by the entencyon of the doer. For neyther the hyder of the golde/ ne the deliuer of the felde/ ne vnderſtoden nat/ that ỳ golde ſhuld haue ben founde. But as I ſayd/ it betyd and ran togider/ that he dalfe there as that other had hyd the golde. Nowe maye I thus deſpuyſſhe hap. Hap is an vnware betydyng of cauſes/ aſſembled in thynges that ben don for ſome other thing. But thilke order procedyng by an vnefchuable betydyng togyder/ whiche ỳ diſcendeth fro the well of purueyaunce/ that ordeyneth al thynges in her place and in her tymes maketh/ that the cauſes ioyneth and aſſembleth togyther.

Rupis Achemenee fropulis vbi rectus sequancum. Perconabas hugus speculaꝛ. ꝛc.

TIgris and Eufrates/reſoluen & ſpra gen of o wel/in the cragges of the roche of the countre of Achemenes/ there as the ſteyage batayle ſtyen her dartes returnyng/ in the bürſtes of hem that folowen hem. And ſoone after the ſame ryuers Tigris and Eufrates/vnopuen and departen her waters/ & if they comen togider/and ben aſſembled and deped togyder in to o courſe/thā moten thilke thynges ſtetyn togider/whiche that the water of the enterrhaungynge flood bringeth. The ſtyppes and the ſtockes arated with the flood moten aſſembliy/ and the waters ymedled/ wappeth or implyeth many fortunel happes & maneres/the whiche wandryng happes nathēles/thilke declinynge ſowneſſe of the erthe/ and the flowynge ordre of the ſlydynge water gouerneth. Right ſo fortune that ſemeth/as it ſteeth with ſlaked or vngouerned bridles/it ſuffreth bridles/that is to ſayn/ to ben gouerned/& paſſeth by thilke lawe/ that is to ſayn/ by the deuyne ordenaunce.

Animaduerto inq̄/ quq̄ vtī tu dicis ita eſſe/ conſentio. Sed in hac perentium. ꝛc.

THis vnderſtande I wel (quod I) & I acorde me that it is right as thou ſayſt. But I aſke if ther be any ſperte of fre wyl in this ordre of cauſes/ that dimen thus togider in hem ſelf/or elſe I wolde wyten/ if that the deſtinal cheyn conſtraynyeth the mouynge of the courages of men. Philo. Ye (q̄d ſhe) ther is lyberte of fre wyl/ ne ther ne was neuer no nature of reaſon/ that it ne had liberte or fre wyl. For euery thynge that may naturally vſen reaſon/ it hath dome/ by whiche it determeth and demeth euery thinge/ That knoweth it by it ſelfe thynges that ben to ſchyen/and thinges that ben to deſpyen/ and thilke thinge that any wight demeth to ben deſyred/that aſſeth or deſyreth he/ & ſchyeth thilke thing that he troweth be to ſchyen. Wherfore in al thinges that reaſon is/ in him alſo is leberte of wyllynge and of nyllynge/ but I ne or deyne nat/ who ſayth/ I ne graunt nat/ þ this liberte be euery like in al thinges. For why in the ſouerayne deuynes ſubſtaunces/ that is to ſayn/in ſpirites/iugement is more clere & wyl nat corrumpe/and mighty redy to ſpeden thinges that ben deſyred. But þ ſoules of mē moten nedes ben more fre/ whan they loken hem in the ſpeculatyon or lokynge of the deuyne thought/and laſſe fre whan they ſlyden in to the bodyes/ and yet laſſe fre whan they ben gadered togider & comprehended in erthly membres/ but the laſt ſeruage/ is whan that they ben yeuen to vices/ & haue yfal from the poſſeſſyon of her propre reaſon. For after that they haue roſt away her eyen fro the light of the ſouerayn ſtedfaſtneſſe/to lowe thinges and darke/ anone they darken by the clowde of ygnoraunce/ and be troubled by felonous talentes/to the which talētes whan they aprochen and aſſenten/ they heapen and encreaſen the ſeruage whiche they haue ioyned to hem ſelfe. And in this maner they ben captiues fro her propre liberte/the whiche thinge natheleſſe the lokyng of the deuyne pouruyaunce ſeeth/ that al thinges beholdeth and ſeeth fro eterne/ and ordeyneth hem euerych in her merites/ as they ben predeſtynate/and it is ſayd in greke/ that al thinges he ſeeth/& al thinges he hereth.

Puro clarum lumine phebum Melliflut canit ore Homerus. ꝛc.

HOmer with the hony mouthe/that is to ſayn/Homer with the ſwete dytees ſingeth/that the ſonne is clere by pure light. Natheleſſe yet ne may it nat by the infirme light of his bones/bredyn or perceyn the inwarde entrayles of the erthe/or elſe of þ ſee. So ne ſeeth nat god maker of the great worlde/ to hym þ loketh al thinges from an high/ne vnderſtandeth nothinges by heuyneſſe of erthe/ ne the night ne withſtandeth nat to hym by þ blacke clowdes/ thilke god ſeeth lo ſtroke of thought al thinges that ben/ weren/ or ſhul come: and thilke god/ for he loketh and ſeeth al thinges alone/thou mayſt ſayne þ he is the very ſonne.

Tum ego en inq̄ difficiliore rurſus ambiguitate confundor. ꝛc.

Than sayd I thus/now me thynk I cõfounded by a more harde doute thã I was. Philo. What doute is that (quod she) for certes I conceyte now by suche thinges thou art troubled. Boe. It semeth (qõ I) to repugnen and to contrary gretly / that god knoweth before al thinges/and that there is any fredom or liberte / for if so be that god loseth al thinges before/ne god ne may not ben deceyued in no maner. Than mote it nedes be/ that al thinges the which that ỹ purueyaunce of god hath sene before to come / for whiche if that god knoweth tofore/nat onely the werkes of men/but also her counsayls and her wylles/ than ne shal there be no liberte of arbytre / ne certes there ne may be none other dede / ne no wyl/but thilke whiche that the deuyne purueyaunce (that ne may nat ben deceyued) hath seled before/for if ỹ they mighten wythenaweye in other maner than they ben pursueyed / than ne shulde there be no stedfast p̄science of thing to comen/ but rather an vncertayn opynion/ the whiche thinge to trowen of god / I deme it felony and vnlefful. Ne I ne proue nat thilke same reason/as who sayth/ I ne alowe nat/or I ne prayse nat thilke same reason/by whiche that some men wenen ỹ they mowen assoylen and vnknytten the knotte of this questyon.

For certes they seyn/that thyng nys nat to comen/for that ỹ purueyaunce of god hath seen before that it is to comen/but rather the contrary/and that is this/that for that ỹ thinges is to comen/that therfore ne maye it nat ben hyd fro the purueyaunce of god. And in this maner this necessyte slydeth ayen in to the contrary party/ ne it ne behoueth nat nedes / that thinges betyden that ben ypurueyed/but it behoueth nedes that thinges that ben to comen ben ypurueyed/but as it were ytrauayled/as who sayth that thilke answere procedeth right as though men trauayleden or weren busy to enquyren/ the which thing is cause of ỹ which thinges. As whether the prescience is cause of the necessyte of thinges to comen/or els that ỹ necessyte of thinges to comen is cause of the purueyaunce. But I ne enforce me nat now to shewen it/ ỹ the betidynge of thinges ywyst before is necessary/ howe so or in what maner/ ỹ the ordre of causes hath it selfe/ al thoughe that it ne seme nat that ỹ prescience bring in necessyte of betydyng/to thinges to comen. For certes if that any wight sytteth / it behoueth by necessyte that the opynyon be sothe of hym that conceyueth that he sytteth/ and ayenwarde also is it of ỹ cõtrary/ for if ỹ opynion be soth of any wight for that he sytteth/it behoueth by necessyte that he syt. Than is here necessite in that one and in that other: for in that one is necessite of syttynge / and certes in that other is necessyte of soth. But therfore ne sytteth nat a wyght/ for that the opynyon of the syttynge is sothe / but the opynyon is rather soth for that a wight sytteth before. And thus al though that the cause of the sothe cometh of that other syde/ as who sayth/that although the cause of sothe cometh of the syttyng / and nat of the trewe opinyon/ algates yet is there a cõmune necessyte in that one ỹ in that other.

Thus sewyth it/ that I may make semblable skylles of ỹ purueyaunce of god/and of thinges to comen. For al though that for that thinges ben to comen/therfore ben they pursueyed/ and nat certes for they ben pursueyed/ therfore ne betyde they nat / natheless it behoueth by necessyte/that eyther the thinges to comen ben ypurueyed of god/or els that the thinges that ben purueyed of god betyden. And this thynges onely suffyseth ynoughe to destroyen the fredom of our arbytre/that is to sayn/ of our fre wyl. But certes nowe shewyth it wel howe ferre fro the soth/ and howe vp so downe is this thinge/that we sene that the betidynge of temporal thinges is cause of the eterne purueyaunce. But for to wenen ỹ god purueyeth thynges to comen / for they ben to comen / What other thinge is it but for to wene / that thilke thinges ỹ betyde whylom/ ben causes of thilke soueravne purueyaunce that is in god. And here to adde I yet this thynges / that ryght as whan that I wote that a thing is/it behoueth by necessyte that thilke selfe thinge be/ and eke whan I haue knowen that any thinge shall betydyn so behoueth it by necessyte that thilke same thinges betyde. So folowyth it than/ that the betydyng of ỹ thinges ywyst before ne may nat be eschued/ and at the last / if that

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any wyght wene a thig to ben otherwyse than it is/ it nys nat only vnsauēe/ but it is deceyuable opynyon/ful dyuers and ferre fro the sad of science. Wherfore if any thinge be so to comen/ that the betydynge of it ne be not certayne ne necessary/ who may weten before ꝑ thilke thinge is to comen. For right as science ne may nat be medled with falsnesse/ as who sayth/ that if I wote a thing/ it ne may nat be false that I ne wote it/ right so thilke thinge ꝑ is conceyued by science/ ne maye nat be none otherwyse than as it is conceyued/ for that is the cause why that science wanteth lesyng/ as who sayth/ why ꝑ that weting ne receyueth nat knyng of that it wote/ for it behoueth by necessyte that euery thyng be right/ as science cōprehendeth it to be. What shal I than sayn/ in which maner dno weth god before al the thynges to comen/ if they ne be nat certeyne/ for yf ꝑ be demed/ that they ben to comen vnfethuably/ and so may be that it is possible ꝑ they ne shullen nat comen/ god is deceyued/ but nat only to trowen that god is deceyued/ but for to speke it with mouth/ it is a felonous synne. But if that god wote/ that right so as thinges ben to comen/ so shullen thy comen/ so that he wote egally/ as who sayth vndifferētly/ that thinges may be done/ or els nat doone. What is thilke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certeyne thing ne stable/ or els what difference is there betwene the prescience of thilke sage worthy deuynynge of Tirese deuynour/ that sed. Al that I say (quod he) either it shal be/ or els it ne shal nat be/ or els howe moche is worth the deuyne prescience more than the opynyon of mannynde/ if so be that it demeth the thinges vncerteyne/ as men done. Of the whiche domes of men/ the betydynge nys nat mityne. But if so be/ ꝑ none vncerteyne thinges ne may ben in hym/ that is right certeyne wel of al thinges/ than is ꝑ betydyng certeyne of thilke thinges/ whiche that he hath wyst before fermely to comen/ for which it folo weth that the fredom of the counsayls & of the werkes of mānynde nys none/ syth ꝑ the thought of god that seeth al thinges without errour of falsnesse/ byndeth and constreyneth hem to a betydynge by necessyte. And if this thinge be

omen ygraunted and receyued/ this is to sayn/ that there nys no fre wyl/ than sheweth it wel how we great destruccyon & how great domages there folowen of thinges of mānynde/ for ay del ben there than purposed and bethyght medes to good folke and paines to bad folke/ syth that no mouynge of fre courage volūtary/ ne hath not deserued hem/ that is to sayn neyther mede ne payn. And it shulde seme thā that thilke thinge is alderworst/ whiche that is now demed for alder most iust & most ryghtful. That is to sayne/ ꝑ shrewes ben punysshed/ or els that good folke be ꝑguerdoned/ the whiche folkes sene that her propre wyl ne sent hem to that one/ ne to that other. That is to sayn/ neyther to good ne harme/ but constreyneth hem certeyn necessyte of thinges to comē/ than ne shullen there neuer ben ne neuer weren vyce ne vertue/ but it shullen rather be confusyon of al desertes medled without discrecyon. And yet there folo weth another incōuenience/ of ꝑ whiche there ne may be thought no more felonous ne more wycked/ and that is thus/ that so as the ordre of thinges is pled & cometh of the puruepaunce of god/ ne that no thinge nys lesful to the counsayls of mannynde/ as who sayth/ ꝑ men haue no power to don nothig ne wyl nothig/ than folo weth it ꝑ our vices ben referred to ꝑ maker of al good/ as who saith/ than folo weth it ꝑ god ought to haue the blame of our vices/ syth he constrayneth vs by necessyte to done vyces/ than nys there no reason to hoopen in god ne to prayen to god/ for what shulde any wyght hopen to god/ or why shulde he prayen to god/ syth that the ordenaunce of destyne/ which that ne may nat ben enclyned/ knytteth & streyneth al thinges that men may despyen. Than shulde there be don away thylke onely alpaunce betwene god and man/ that is to sayn/ to hopen and to prayen. But by the pyke of right wysnesse & of very mekenesse/ we deseruen ꝑ guerdon of diuyne grace/ whiche that is inestymable/ that is to say/ that is so gret that it ne may not ben ful praysed/ & this is only the maner/ that is to say/ hope & prayere. For whiche it semeth that men wol speke with god/ and by reson of supplycacion ben comouned to thylke clernesse/

that nys nat approched no rather or that men seken it and impetren it. And if men ne weren nat ỹ hope ne prayers/ne haue no strengthes by the necessyte of thinges to comen receyued/ what thing is ther than/ by which we mowen ben cõioyned & cleuen to thilke souerayn price of thinges. For which it behoueth by necessyte that the lygnage of mankynde/ as thou song a lytel here beforn/be departed and vnioyned from his wel/and fayleth of his begynnynge/ that is to sayn god.

Que nam discors federa rerum
Causa resoluit: quis tanta deus. &c.

What discordable cause hath to rente and vnoyned the byndynge or the alyaūce of thinges/that is to sayn/ the conuinctyons of god & of man: Which god hath establissshed so great batayle bytwene these two sothfast or very thynges/ that is to sayn/bytwene the puruepaunce of god and fre wyl/ that they ben synguler and deuided/ne that they ne wolen nat ben medled ne coupled togider: But ther nys no discorde to the very thynges/ but they cleuen alwaye certeyne to hem selfe. But the thought of man confounded & ouerthrowen by the darke membres of ỹ body/ne may nat by fyre of his darked lokyng/ that is to sayn/ by the vigour of his insight/ while ỹ soule is in ỹ body/knowē the thyn subtel knyttynges of thynges. But wherfore eschaufeth it so by so great loue/ to fynden thilke notes of soth prouered/ that is to sayn/ wherfore eschaufeth the thought of man by so great desyre/ to knowe thilke notifications that ben yhyd vnder the couertures of soth: wote it ought thilke thing/ that it an gryssshous desyreth to knowe: As who sayth nay. For no man ne trauayleth for to weten thinges that he wote. & therfore ỹ texte sayth thus. But who trauayleth to weten thynges yknowe: and if that he ne knoweth hem nat/ what seketh thilke blynde thought: what is he ỹ desyreth any thinges/of which he wot right naught: As who sayth/ who so desyreth any thinges/nedes somwhat he knoweth of it/ or els he ne coude nat desyren it. or who may forsowe thinges that ne ben nat ywyst/ & thoughe that hoseue the thinges/ where shal he fynden hem: what wight that is al vnconnyng and ignoraunt may know ỹ forme ỹ is yseide. But whan the soule beholdeth & seeth the hye thought/ ỹ is to sayn god/than knoweth it togyder the some & singularites/that is to sayn/ the principles/ & enerriche of hem by hym self. But now whyle the soule is hyd in the clowde & in the darknesse of the membres of the body/ it ne hath nat al forgeten it selfe/ but it withholdeth the somme of thinges/ and kepeth the synguarites. Than who so that seeth sothnesse/he nys in neyther nother habyte/ for he wot nat al/ ne he ne hath nat al forgeten/ but yet hym remembreth the some of thinges that he withholdeth/and asketh counsayle/and treateth deplych thinges yfene beforn/ that is to sayn/the great somme in his mynde/so that he mowe adden the partes that he hath forgeten to thilke parties that he hath withholden.

Tum illa. Vetus inquit/ hec est de prouidencia querela: Warroch Tullio. &c.

Than sayd she/this is (quod she) the olde ẽstryf of ỹ puruepãce of god. And Marcus Tullius whan he deuyded the deuinacions/ that is to sayn/ in his bokes that he wrote of deuinacions/he moued greatly this question/ and thou thy selfe hast ysought it mochel/ and vtterly and longe/ but yet ne hath it nat ben determined ne ysped fermely and dilygently of any of you/ & ỹ cause of this darknesse and of this difficulte is/ for that the mouinge of the reason of mankynde ne may nat mouen to/that is to sayn applyen or ioynen to the simplicite of the deuine puruiaunce/the whiche simplicite of the deuine puruiaunce/if ỹ mē mighten thinke it in any manere. That is to sayn/ ỹ if men mighten thinke and comprehenden the thinges ỹ god seeth him self/ than there dwelled vtterly no doute/the whiche reason & cause of difficultees/ I shal assaye at last to shewe & to speden whan I haue first yspended & answered to thy reasons/by whiche thou arte moued/for I ase why thou wenest ỹ thilke reasons of hem ỹ assoylen this [illegible]

ne be nat ſpedefull ynoughe ne ſuffycyent/ the whiche ſolutyon or the whiche reaſon/ for that it demeth/ that the preſcience is not of neceſſyte of thynges to come/ as who ſayth/ any other way than thus/ but that thilke thynges that the preſcience wote before/ ne maye not vnbetyden/ that is to ſayne/ that they moten betyde. But than/ if that preſcience ne putteth none neceſſyte to thynges to comen/ as thou thy ſelfe haſt confeſſed it and before we a lyte her before/ what cauſe or what is it/ as who ſayth/ there may no cauſe be/ by whiche that the endes voluntary of thynges myghten be conſtrayned to certayn betyding. For by grace of poſycion/ ſo that thou maye the better vnderſtande this that foloweth/ I ſuppoſe that there ne be no preſcience. Than aſke I (quod ſhe) in as moche as aperteyneth to that/ ſhulden than thynges that comen of fre wyl be conſtrayned to betyding by neceſſyte: Do. Naye (quod I) Phi. Than ayenwarde (quod ſhe) I ſuppoſe that there be preſcience/ but that it ne putteth no neceſſyte to thynges/ than trowe I that thilke ſame fredome of wyl ſhal dwellen al hole and abſolute/ and vnwounden. But thou wylte ſayne/ that al be it ſo that preſcience ne put cauſe of the neceſſyte of betyding to thynges to comen/ algates yet it is a ſigne that the thynges ben to betyden by neceſſyte. By this maner than although ỹ preſcience had neuer be/ yet algates or at leſt way/ it is certeyn thyng that endes of betidinges of thinges to comen ſhulden be neceſſarye. For euery thynge ſheweth and ſignyfyeth onely what the thyng is/ but it ne maketh not the thyng that it ſignifyeth. For whiche it behoueth firſt to ſhewe that nothynge ne betydeth/ that it ne betydeth by neceſſyte: ſo that it may aperr that the preſcience is ſigne of neceſſyte/ or elſe if there were no neceſſyte/ certes thilke preſcience ne myght nat be ſigne of thyng that ne is not. But certes it is no we certayne/ that the proue of this yfaſſigned by ſtedfaſt reaſon/ ne ſhal nat ben lad ne proued by ſignes ne by argumentes/ ta ben fro without/ but by cauſes conenable and neceſſarye. But thou mayſte ſayne/ how we maye it be that the thynges ne betyden not/ that ben purueyed to comen? But certes right as we trowen that the thynges/ whiche that the purueyaunce wote before/ to comen ne be not to betyden. But that ne ſhulde we not demen/ but rather although they ſhal betyden/ yet ne haue they no neceſſyte of her vnde to betyden: and thus mayſte thou lightly aperceyuen by this that I ſhal ſayne. For we ſene many thynges whan they ben before our eyen/ right as men ſene the carter worchyng in the tournyng ꝛ in the attempring or adreſſyng of his cartes or chariottes/ ꝛ by this maner/ as who ſayth/ mayſte thou vnderſtande of al other werkemen. Is ther than any neceſſyte/ as who ſayth in our ſeeyng/ that conſtrayneth or compelleth any of thilke thynges to be doone ſo? Boece. Nay (quod I) for in vdel ꝛ in vayne were al the effecte of craſte/ if that al thynges weren moued by conſtraynynge of our eyen or of our ſyght. Philoſo. The thynges than (quod ſhe) that whan that men done hem/ ne haue no neceſſyte that men done hem/ eke tho ſame thynges firſt or they be done/ they ben to comen without neceſſyte: for why there ben ſome thynges to betyden/ of whiche the endes and the betydinges of hem ben abſolute and quyte of al neceſſyte. For certes I ne trowe not that any man wolde ſayne this/ that the thinges that men done now/ that they ne were to betyden firſt/ er they were done. And thilke ſame thynges/ although men hadden wyſte hem before/ yet they haue fre betynges. For right as ſcience of thynges preſent ne bringeth in no neceſſite to thinges that men done/ right ſo to the preſcience of thynges to comen/ ne bringeth in none neceſſyte to thynges to betyden. But thou mayſt ſayn/ that of thilke ſame it is douted/ as whether that of thilke thynges/ that ne haue none iſſues and betydinges neceſſaryes/ if therof may ben any preſcience. For certes they ſemen to diſorden/ for thou weneſt that if that thynges ben ſene before that neceſſyte folo weth hem/ and if neceſſyte ſayleth hem/ they ne myght not ben wyſt before/ and that nothyng maye be comprehended by ſcience but certayne. And if tho thinges ne haue no certayn betyding/ ſe purueyed as certe yet ſhuld be derkeneſſe of opinion/ not ſothfaſtneſſe of ſcience. And thou weneſt ỹ it be dyuers

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for ꝑ holeneſſe of ſcience/ that any man ſhulde deme a thing to be otherwyſe than it is it ſelfe/ and the cauſe of this errour is/ that of al the thynges that euery wight hath knowe/ they wene that tho thynges ben knowe only by the ſtrength and by the nature of the thynges that ben wyſte or knowe/ and it is al the contrary: for al that euer is knowe/ it is rather comprehended and knowe/ not after his ſtrength and his nature/ but after the faculte/ that is to ſayne/ the power and the nature of hem that knowen. And for that this thyng ſhulde now ſhewe by a ſhorte enſample the roundneſſe of a body/ otherwyſe than the ſyght of the eye knoweth it/ & otherwyſe than the touchynge. The lokyng/ by caſtyng of his beames/ wayteth and ſeeth from a ferre al ꝑ body togyther/ without mouyng of it ſelfe/ but the touchyng cleaueth to the rounde body/ and moueth aboute the enuyronnynge/ and comprehendeth the parties by roundneſſe/ and the man hym ſelfe otherwyſe beholdeth him/ & otherwayes ymagynacion/ and otherwyſe reaſon/ & otherwyſe intellygence: for the wytte comprehendeth without ſorthe the ſygure of the body of man/ that is ſuſtablyſſhed in the mater ſubiecte. But the ymagynacion comprehendeth only the ſigure without the mater. Reſon ſurmounteth ymagynacion/ and comprehendeth by vniuerſal lokynge the cõmune ſpeche/ but the eye of intelligence is higher/ for it ſurmoũteth the enuyronnyng of the vniuerſyte/ & lokeeth ouer that/ by pure ſubtylite of thought. Thilke ſame ſymple fourme of man/ that is perdurable in the diuyne thought/ in whiche this ought greatly to be conſydred/ ꝑ the hyeſt ſtrength for to comprehenden thinges/ embraſeth and contayneth the lower ſtrength/ but the lower ſtrength ne aryſeth nat in no maner to the hyer ſtrength. For wytte ne may comprehẽde nothyng out of mater/ ne ꝑ ymagynacion ne lokeeth not the vniuerſal ſpeces/ ne reaſon ne taſteth not the ſymple fourme/ ſo as intellygence taſteth it. But intellygence that lokeeth al aboute/ whan it hath comprehẽded the fourme/ it knoweth & demeth al the thynges that ben vnder ꝑ fourme/ but ſhe knoweth hem in thylke maner/ in whiche it comprehendeth thilke ſame ſymple fourme/ that ne may neuer ben knowen of none of ꝑ other/ that is to ſay/ to none of tho thre forſayde ſtrengthes of the ſoule/ for it knoweth the vniuerſite of reaſon and the ſygure of ymagynacion/ & the ſenſyble materyal cõceyued by wytte/ ne it ne vſeth not ne of reaſon/ ne of ymagynacion/ ne of wytte without forthe/ but it beholdeth al thynges/ ſo as I ſhal ſay/ by a ſtroke of thought ſemely without diſcours of collacion. Lettre reaſon whã it lokeeth any thing vniuerſal/ it ne vſeth not of ymagynacion ne wytte/ and algates yet it comprehendeth the thynges ymagynable and ſenſible/ for reaſon is ſhe that diffyniſſheth the vniuerſal of her conceyte right thus. Man is a reſonable two foted beeſt/ and howe ſo that this knowyng is vniuerſal/ yet nys there no wight that ne wote wel that a man is a thing ymagynable and ſenſyble/ and this ſame reaſon deſpiſeth wel reaſon/ but that nys not by ymagynacion/ nor by wytte/ but it lokeeth it by reſonable conception. Alſo ymagynacion/ al be it ſo that it taſteth of wytte the begynnyng/ to ſene & fourmen the ſygures/ algates although that wytte ne were not preſent/ yet it enuyronneth & comprehendeth al thynges ſenſyble/ not by reaſon ſenſyble of demyng/ but by reaſon ymagynatiſe. Seeſt thou not than that al the thynges in knowyng vſen more of her faculte or of her power/ than they done of the faculte or power of thinges that ben to knowen: ne that is no wrong/ for ſo as euery ingement is ꝑ dede or doyng of hym that demeth/ it behoueth that euery wight performe his werke & his entencion not of forayn power/ but of his propre power.

Quondam porticus attulit. Obſcuros nimium ſenes. ꝛc.

Whan the porche/ that is to ſay a gate of the towne of Athenes/ there as philoſophers hadden congregacion to diſpute/ thilke porche brought ſomtyme olde mẽ ful derke in her ſentences/ that is to ſay philoſophers/ that hyghten ſtoiciẽs/ that wende that ymages and ſenſibylites/ ꝑ is to ſay/ ſenſible ymaginacions or elles ymagynacions of ſenſible thinges/ were empriſed in to ſoules fro bodies without ſo-

as lyke

as who sayth/thilke sloicisms wenden that the soule had be naked of hym selfe/ as a mynstour or a clerke perchemyne/ so that al sygures muste firste comen fro thynges fro without in to soules/ and ben empunted in to soules/ ryght as we ben wonte sometyme tip a swyfte poynted to fyuen letters empunted in ȳ smothnesse of the playnesse of the table of waxe/ or in the parchemyne/ that hath no sygure ne note in it. Glose. But nowe argueth Boece ayenst that opynion/ and sayethe thus. But if the thynkyng soule ne vnplyeth nothynge/ that is to sayne/ ne dothe thyng by his propre moeyng/ but suffreth and lyeth subiecte to the sygures and to the notes of bodyes without forth/ and yeldeth ymages ydel/ puel & bayne/ in the maner of a mynstour. Whence thinketh than or whence cometh thilke knowyng in our soule/ that discerneth and beholdeth al thynges/ and whence is thilke strength that beholdeth the synguler thynges/ or els whence is the strength that diuydeth thynges yknowe/ and thilke strength that gathered togyther thynges deuyded/ and strength that choseth the enchaūged way: For somtyme it heaueth the hed/ that is to saye/ that it heaueth vp the entencion to ryght hyghe thynges/ and somtyme it bifendeth in to right lowe thynges/ & whan it retourneth in to hym selfe/ it reprouueth and distropeth the false thynges by the true thynges. Certes this strength is cause more effyment and moche more mighty/ to sene and to knowen thynges/ than thilke cause that sustaineth and receyueth the notes and sygures unpassed in maner of mater. Algates the passyon/ that is to say/ the suffrance or the wytte in the quicke body gothe before excityng & moeyng the strēgthes of the thought/ right so as whan that clernesse smyteth the eyen/ and moueth hem to sene/ or right so as voyce or sowyng sorteth to the eres/ and cōmoueth hem to herken/ than is the strengthe of the thought moued & excited/ cleyeth forthe to semblable moeynges the speces that it halte within it selfe/ and addeth the speces to the notes/ and to thynges without forth/ and medleth the ymages of thynges without forth/ to thynges hyd within hym selfe.

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis quamuis efficiant instrumenta sensuum. &c.

But what is that in bodyes to be seled/ that is to say/ in the tastynge and in the knowynge of bodily thynges. And al be it so that the qualitees of bodyes that be obiecte fro without forth/ mouen & entalenten the instrumentes of the wyttes/ and al be it so that the passyon of the body/ that is to sayne/ the wytte or the suffraunce gothe before the strength or the worthynge corage/ the whiche passyon or suffraūce clepeth forth the dede of the thought in it selfe/ and moueth & excyteth in this meane whyle/ ȳ fourmes that resten within forthe/ & insensible bodies/ as I haue said/ our courages not taught or empunted by passyon to knowe these thynges/ but demeth & knoweth of his owyn strength ȳ passion or suffraūce/ subiecte to the body: moche more than tho thinges ben absolute and quyte fro al talentes or affections of bodyes/ as god or his angels/ ne folowen not in discernyng thinges obiecte fro without forthe/ but they accomplissshen and speden the dedes of her thought. By this reason than there comen many maner of knowynges to dyuers and to differyng substaunces. For the wytte of the body/ the whiche wyt is naked and despoyled of al other knowyng/ thilke wytte cometh to berstes/ the whiche ne nowen not mouen hem selfe here and there/ as oysters and muskels/ and other suche shelfyshe of the see/ that cleuen & ben nouyshed to rockes/ but the ymagynacion cometh of remuable berstes/ that semen to haue talent to flyen or to desyren any thyng: But reason is alonely the ymage of mankynde/ ryght as intelligence is alonely the diuyne nature/ of whiche it folowyth/ that thilke knowynge is more worthe than is ether/ sens it knoweth by his propre nature not onely his subiecte/ as who sayth/ it ne knoweth not alonly that appertayneth properly to his knowynge/ but it knoweth the subiectes of al other knowynges. But how we shal it than be/ if that wytte & ymagynacion stryuen ayen reasonyng/ and sayne that of thilke vniuersal thynge that reasoneth to sene/ that it nys ryght nought/ for

wytte

wytte and ymagynacion sayne/ that that is sensyble or ymaginable/it ne may not ben vniuersal. Than is there eyther the iugement of reason sothe/ne that there nys nothyng sensyble/or els for that reason wote wel/that many thynges ben subiecte to wytte and to ymagynacion: than is the conception of reson vayne and false/whiche that loketh and comprehendeth/ that that is sensyble ꝛ synguler/ as vniuersal. And if that the reason wolde answere ayenst these two/ that is to saye/ to wytte and ymagynacion/and say that sothly she her selfe that is to sayne reason/ loketh and comprehendeth by reason of vniuersalite/bothe that that is sensyble/ and that that is ymaginable/and thilke two/that is to sayne/ wytte and ymaginacion/ ne mowen not stretchen hem selfe to the knowing of vniuersalite/for that the knowyng of hem ne may not exceden ne surmounten ỹ bodily sygures. Certes of the knowyng of thynges men oughten rather yeuen more credence to the more stedfaste and to the more perfyte iugement in this maner stryuynge/ than we that haue strength of reasonyng and of ymagynacion/and of wytte/that is to say/ by reason and by ymaginacion/ we wolde rather prayse the cause of reason/ as who sayth/ than the cause of wytte and of ymagynacion. Semblable thyng is it/that the reason of mānynde ne weneth not that the diuyne intelligence/beholdeth or knoweth thynges to come/ but right as the reason of mānynde knoweth hem: for thou arguyst thus/ that if that it ne seme not to men/ that some thynges haue certayne betydinges/ they ne maye not be wyste before certainly to betyden/ and than is there no presaence of thilke thynges: ꝛ if we trowe that presciēce be in these thynges/ than is there nothynge that betydeth by necessyte. But if we myght haue the iugement of the diuyne thought/as we ben parteners of reason/right so as we haue demed/ that it behoueth by ymagynacion and wytte/ ꝛ beneth reason/ right so wold we demen that it were right ful thing/ that mans reason ought to submyt it selfe to be beneth the diuyne thought/for whiche if we may/as who saith/that if we may I cōsayle that we enhaunce vs in the height of thilke soueraine intelligence/for there shal reason wel sene ther ỹ it ne may not beholde in it self/ and certes that is thus/ in what maner the presaence of god seeth al thynges and dessymuleth/ al though they haue no certayne betydinges: ne this is non opinyon/but rather the symplicite of the soueraine scaence/ that is not shette within no maner of boundes.

Quā variis terrās animalia permeant figuris. Namq; alia extento sūt corpe. ꝛc.

The beestes passen by the erthes by sundryes sygures/for some of hem haue her bodyes straught/ and creepen in the duste/ꝛ drawen after hem a trace or a sorough contynued/ that is to say/ as nedders ꝛ snayles/and other beestes/ by the wandring lightnesse of her wynges beaten the wynde/ꝛ ouer swymmen the spaces of ỹ longe ayre/by moste flyeng. And other beestes gladen hem selfe/to dyggen her traces or her steppes in the erthe with her gopynge or with her sete/ and to goone eyther by the grene feldes/or els to walken vnder the woodes. And al be it so that thou seest that they disordeyn by dyuers fourmes/ algates her face enclyned heaupeth her dul wyttes/ onely the lynage of man heaueth vpyghest his hye heed/ꝛ standeth light with his vpright body/ꝛ beholdeth the erthes vnder him. And but if thou erthly man wayest put out of thy wytte/this sygure amoneshyth the/ that oftest the heuen with thy right visage/ꝛ hast arrysed thy forheed to beaten vp on hygh thy corage/ so ỹ thy thought ne be not heuyed ne put lowe vnder fote/syth ỹ thy body is so high arrysed.

Quoniam igitur vti paulo ante monstratum est/omne quod scitur. ꝛc.

Therfore than/as I haue shewed a lytel here before/that al thing that is wyst nys not knowen by his nature propre/but by the nature of hem that comprehenden it. Let vs loken nowe/ in as moche as it is leful to vs/ as who sayth/let vs loken nowe as we maye/ whiche ỹ is the estate of the diuyne substaunce/ so ỹ we may wel knowe what hys sayre is.

The

The cõmune iugement of al creatures reasonables than is/that god is eterne. Let vs cõsyder than what is eternite/for certes that shal we wel vnderstonde the diuyne nature and the diuyne eternite. Eternyte than is perfyte possessyon/and al togyder al lyfe interminable/ and that sheweth the more clerely by the comparyson or collacyon of temporal thynges. For al thyng that lyueth in tyme/it is present/ and proceedeth fro preterites in to futures/that is to sayne/ from tyme passed in to tyme cõmyng: ne there nys no thyng establyssshed in tyme/that may enbracen togyther al the space of this lyfe/ for certes yet ne hath it not taken the tyme of to morowe/and it hath lost that of yesterday. And certes in the lyfe of this daye/ ye ne lyuen nomore/ but right as in this mouable and transytorie moument. Than thilke thynge that suffreth temporal condycyon/ al though that it neuer began to be/ ne though it neuer cease to be (as Aristoteles demed of the worlde) and although the lyfe of it be stretched with infynite of tyme/ yet algates nys it no lyke thynge/ as men myght trowen by right that it is eterne. For al thoughe that it comprehende and enbrace the space of the lyfe infynite/yet algates ne enbraceth it not ỹ space of the lyfe al togyther/ for it ne hath not the futures that be not yet: ne it ne hath no lenger the preterites that ben don or passed. But thilke thyng than/that hath and comprehendeth togyder al the plentie of the lyfe interminable/to whom there ne fayleth naught of the future/ and to whom there nys naught of the preterite escaped or passed/ thilke same is y'witnessed and proued by right to ben eterne. And it behoueth by neessyte that thylke thynge be alway present to hym selfe/and competent/ as who sayth/ alway present to hym selfe/ and so mayster/ that al be right at his pleasaunce/ and that he haue al present ỹ infynite of the mouable tyme. Wherfore some men trowen wrongfully/ that whan they herey that it semed to Plato/that this worlde had neuer begynnyng of tyme/ that it neuer shal haue ending: they loue in thilke maner/that this worlde be maad eterne/ with his maker/as who sayth/they loue that this worlde and god be maked togyther eterne. And ỹ is a wrongful weneyng/ for other thyng it is to be sadde by the lyfe interminable/ as Plato graũted to the worlde/ and other thynge it is to enbrace togyther/ al the presence of the lyfe that is interminable/ whiche thyng is clere and manyfest to the diuyne thought. Ne it ne shulde not seme to vs that god is elder than thinges that ben maked by quantyte of tyme/but rather by the proprete of his symple nature. For this pleyn vnsyngle mouynges of temporal thynges folowen this presentary estate of this lyfe immouable/ and so as it ne may not counterfaicten ne fayne it/ne be enemyke to it for the immobilyte/that is to say/ that is in the eternyte of god/ it sapseth & falleth in to mouyng fro the symplycyte of the presence of god/& disencreaseth in the infynite quãtyte of future and preterite. And so as it maye not haue togyther al the plentie of the lyfe/ algates yet for as moche as it ceaseth neuer for to ben in some maner/ yet it semeth somdele to vs/that it folowe and resembleth thylke thyng/ that it ne may not attayne to ne fulfylle/ and byndeth it selfe to some maner presence of this lytel moment: the whiche presence of this lytel and swyft moment/ for that it bearreth a maner ymage or lyknesse of the aye dwellyng of god: it graũteth to suche maner thynges/ as it betydeth to/ that it semeth hem/as these thynges haue ben/and ben. And for that the presence of suche lytel moment ne maye not dwel/therfore it ranysshed and tooke thinfynite way of tyme/ ỹ is to sayne/ by succession/ and by this maner it is done/ for that it shulde contynue the lyfe in goyng/ of ỹ whiche lyfe it ne might not enbrace the plentie of dwellyng. And for thy if we wollen put worthy names to thinges that folowen Plato/ let vs saye than forthy/ that god is eterne/ and that the worlde is perpetuel. Than sythe euery iugement knoweth and comprehendeth by his owne nature/thynges that ben subiecte vnto hym/ there as to god alwayes an eterne and a presentarye estate. And the science of him that ouerpasseth al temporal moment/ dwelleth in symplicite of his presence/ and enbraseth and conteyneth al the infynite spaces of tymes preterytes/ and of tymes futures/

and

And loketh in his symple knowynge al thinges of preterite/ right as they weren ydon presently right now we. If thou wylte than thynken & aduyse the prescyence/ by whiche it knoweth al thinges/ thou ne shalt nat demen it as prescience of thinges to comen/ but thou shalt demen more rightfully that it is scyence of presence or of instaunce that neuer ne sayleth/ for which it nys not yclyped ỹuidence/ but it sholde rather ben clepyd purueyaunce/ which is estably ssshed ful ferre fro right lowe thinges/ and beholdeth from a ferre al thynges/ right as it were fro the hye heyght of thynges. Why axest thou than/ or why dysputest thou than/ that thilke thynges ben don by necessyte/ whiche that ben yseene and yknowen by the deuine syght/ syth ỹ forsoth men ne maken nat thilke thynges necessary/ whiche that they sene ben ydon in her syght/ for addeth thy beholdynge any necessyte/ to thylke thyng/ which thou beholdest present? Do. Naye (quod I) Philo. Certes (qd she) than/ if men mighten maken any digne comparyson or collacion of the presence diuyne/ and of the presence of mannes ỹnder: right so as ye sene some thinges in this temporal presence/ ryght so seeth god al thing by his eterne presence. Wherfore this deuyne prescience ne chaungeth not the nature of the propertie of thynges/ but beholdeth such thynges present to him warde/ as they shulden betyden to you warde in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confoundeth not the iugementes of thinges/ but by one syght of his thought he knoweth the thinges to comen/ as wel necessary as not necessarie. Right so whan ye sene togyther a man walke on the erthe/ and the sonne aryse in the heuen/ al be it so that ye sene togyther that one and that other: yet neuertheles ye demen and discernen/ that that one is voluntary/ and that other is necessary: Right so than the deuyne loking/ beholdyng al thynges ỹnder hym/ ne troubleth nat the qualite of thynges that ben certeynly present to hym warde/ but as to the condycyon of tyme/ forsoth they ben future/ for whiche it folo weth/ ỹ this nys none oppynyon/ but rather a stedfast knowynge ystrengthed by sothnesse/ that whan ỹ god knoweth any thynge to be/ he ne knoweth nat that thilke thyng wanteth necessyte to be/ this as to sayn/ that whan that god knoweth any thinge to betyde/ he wote wel ỹ it ne hath no necessyte to betyde. And if thou seyst here that thilke thing that god seeth to betyde/ it ne may nat vnbetyde/ as who sayth it mote betyde/ and thilke thinge that ne may nat vnbetyde/ it mote betyden by necessyte/ & that thou streyn me to thes name of ỹ necessyte. Certes I wyl wel confessen and beknowen a thynge of ful sad trouthe/ but vneth shal there any wight mowe sene it or come therto/ but if that he be beholder of ỹ deuyne thought/ for I wyl answere the thus/ that thilke thyng that is future/ whā it is referred to the deuine knowing/ than it is necessary. But certes whan it is vnderstanden in his owne kynde/ men sene it vtterly sre and absolute fro al necessyte. For certes there ben two maners of necessytes/ that one necessyte is simple/ as thus/ ỹ it behoueth by necessyte/ that al men ben mortal or dedly. Another necessyte is condycyonel/ as thus/ yf thou wost that a man walketh/ it behoueth by necessyte that he walke/ thilke thing than that any wight hath yknowe to be/ it ne may nat be none other wyse than he knoweth it to be. But this condicion ne draweth nat with her thilke necessyte simple/ for certes this necessyte condicionel/ the propre nature of it ne maketh it nat/ but the adiection of the condycyon maketh it. For no necessyte ne constrayneth a man to goy/ that goth by his propre wyl/ al be it so that whan he goth/ that it is necessary that he goth. Right oy this same maner than/ if that the purueyaunce of god seeth any thyng present/ than mote thilke thinge ben by necessyte/ al thoughe that it ne haue no necessyte of his owne nature. But certes the futures that betyden by fredom of arbytrie/ god seeth hem al togyder present. These thinges thā if they ben referred to the deuyne syght/ thā ben they maked necessary by the condycyon of the deuyne knowynge. But certes/ if thilke thynges ben consydered by hem selfe/ they ben absolut of necessyte/ and ne faileth nat/ ne cesseth nat of the fyberte of her owne nature. Than certes without doute al the thinges shullen ben/ whiche that god woot before that they ben to

comen

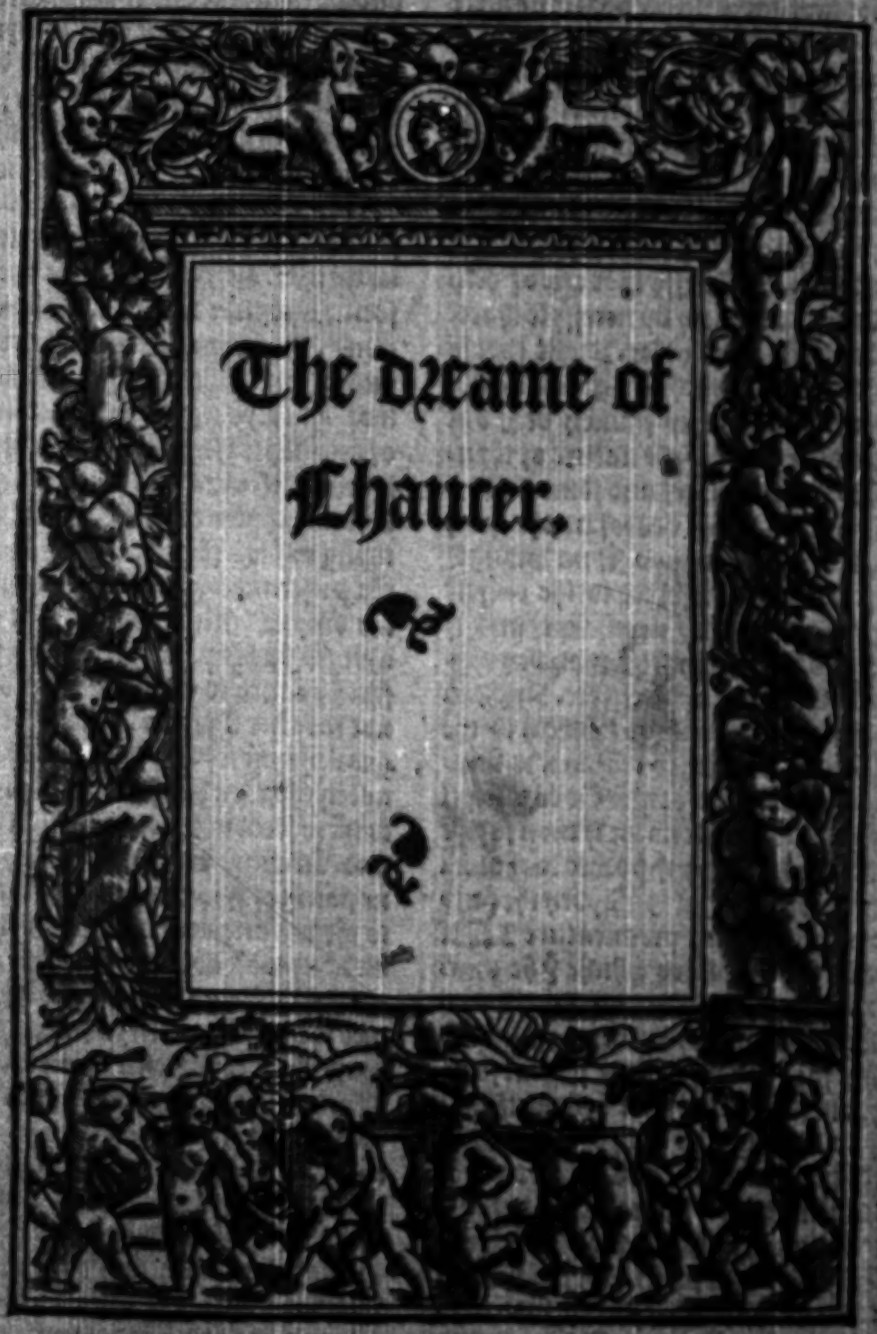
mene and beyden of free arbytrie/or of fre wyl/that al be it so that they beyden/yet algates ne lese they not her propre nature in beynge/ by the whiche first or they weren done/ they hadden power not to haue beyden. Bo. Wat is thou to sayne than (qđ I) that thynges ne be not necessarye by her propre nature/ so that they comen vn al maners in the lyberasse of necessyte/ by condycion of the diuyne science? Philo. Thus is the differences (qđ sse) that tho thynges whiche that I purposed the a tyte here before/ that is to sayne/ sonne arysyng/and the man walkyng/that therwhyles that thilke thynges ben don/they ne might not ben vndone. Natheles that one of hem er it was done/it behoueth by necessyte that it was doone/ but not that other. Right so it is her that the thynges which that god hath present/ withouten doute they shullen ben/ but some of hem descendeth of the nature of thynges/ as the sonne arysynge/ and some descendeth of the power of the doers/ as the man walkyng. Boece. Than sayd I/ no wronge/ that if these thynges be referred to the diuyne knowynge/ than ben they necessarye/ and if they ben consydred by hem selfe/than ben they absolute fro the bonde of necessyte. Right so as al thynges that apereth or sheweth to the wittes/if thou referre hem to reason it is vnyuersal/and if thou lose it or refer it to it selfe/ than is it synguler. But now if thou sayest thus/ that if that it be in my power to chaunge my purpose/than shal I voyden the purueyaunce of god/ whan peraunture I shal haue chaunged the thynges whiche ỳe knoweth before. Philo. Than shal I answeren the thus: Certes thou mayste wel chaunge thy purpose/but for as moche as the present sothfastnesse of the diuyne purueyaūce beholdeth that thou mayste chaunge thy purpose/ and whether thou chaunge it or no/ and whyderwarde that thou tourne it/thou ne mayste not eschue the diuyne prescience: right so thou ne mayste not flye the syght of the present eye/ al though that thou tourne thy selfe by thy fre wyl in to dyuers actions. But thou mayste sayne ayen to this thus: How shal it than be/ shal not the diuyne science hen chaunged by my disposicion/ whan that I wyl one thyng nowe/ and nowe another thyng? And thilke prescience ne semeth it not to entrechaūge stoundes of knowynge/as who sayth/ ne shal it not semen to be/ that the diuyne prescience entrechaungeth his dyuers stoundes of knowynge/ so that it knowe somtyme one thynge/ and somtyme it knoweth the contrarie of that thyng? Philo.

No forsothe (quod she) for the diuyne syght renneth before and seeth al the futures/ and clepeth hem ayen/ and retourneth hem to the propre presence of his propre knowynge/ ne he entrechaungeth not/ so as thou weneste the stoundes of his foreknowyng/ as nowe this/ nowe that: but he dwellynge aye cometh before/ and embraseth at o stroke al the mutacions. And this prescience to comprehenden and to sene al thinges/ god ne hath not taken it of the betydinges of thinges to comen/ but of his propre symplicite. And hereby is assoyled thilke thinges that thou putteste a tyte here before/ that is to sayne/ that it is vnworthy thyng to sayn that our futures yeuen cause of the prescience of god. For certes strength of the diuyne science/ whiche that embraseth al thinges by his presentarie knowyng/establisseth maner to al thynges/ and it ne oweth not to latter thynges. And sythe ỳ these thynges ben thus/that is to sayne/ that necessyte is not in thynges by the diuyne prescience/ than is there fredom of arbytrie that dwelleth hole and vnwemmed to mortal men/ ne the lawes ne pourposen not wicked medes and paynes to the wyllinges of men/that ben vnbounden and quyte of al necessyte: And god beholder and forewiter of al thynges dwelleth aboue/ and the presente eternyte of syght/ renneth alwaye with the dyuers qualyte of our dedes/ dispensyng or ordeynyng medes to good men/ and tourmentes to wicked men. Ne in ydel ne in vayne ne ben there not put in god hope and prayers/that ne mowen not ben vnspedeful/ ne without effecte/ whan they ben rightful.

Withstande than and eschewe thou vyces/ worshyppe and loue thou vertues/ areyse thy corage to rightful hopes/ yelde thou humble prayeres and hyghe. Great necessyte of prowesse and of vertus is encharged and com-

maunded to you if ye wyl not dissimulen/ seth that ye worchen and doone/ that is to sayne/ your dedes and your werkes before the eyen of the iuge/ that seeth and also that demeth al thynges. Deo gracias.

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Boecius of the consolacion of philosophie/ and hereafter foloweth the dreame of Chaucer.



The dreame of Chaucer.

I Haue great wonder by this light
How I lyue/for day ne nyght
I may not slepe/wel ny nought
I am so mased in my thought
Purely for defaute of slepe
That by my trouthe/I take no kepe
Of nothyng/ne wot it cometh or goethe
Ne me nys nothyng lefe nor lothe
All is lyche good to me
Iope or sorow me/where so it be
For I haue felyng in no thyng
But as it were a mased thyng
Alway my purpose to fal adoun
For forowful ymagynacioun
Is alway hoolly in my mynde
And wel ye wote/agayns kynde
I were to dyuers in this wyse
For nature wolde not suffyse
To none erthly creature
Not longe tyme to endure
Without slepe/and be in sorowe
And I ne mayghte nyght ne morowe
Slepe/and thus melancolye
And dede I haue for to dye
Defaute of slepe and frowardnesse
Hath slayne my spyrite of quyckenesse
That I haue lefte all lustyhed
And the fantasyes dry in myn hed
So I not what is best to do
But pitey mought ese me who so
I may not slepe/and what me is
But natheles/who ese this
Lefely his aspyng trewly
My felawy can not tel why
The fothe/but trewly as I gesse
I holde it be a sickenesse
That I haue suffred this eyght yere
And yet my boote is neuer the nere
For there is phisyany but one
That may me heale/but that is done
Passe we ouer until efte
That wyl not be/make nede be lefte
Our first matere is good to slepe
So whan I sawe I might not slepe
Tyl now late/this other nyght
Vpon my bedde I sate vpright
And bade some tydyngs me a booke
A romaunce/and he it me toke
To rede/and dryue the nyght away
For me thought it better play
Than play eyther at Chesse or tables
And in this booke were written fables
That clerkes had in olde tyme
And other poetes/put in ryme
To rede/and for to be in mynde
Whyle men loued the lawe of kynde
This booke me spake/but of suche thynges
Of queynes lyues/and of kynges
And many other thinges smale
Amonge al this I fonde a tale
That me thought a wonder thyng.
This was the tale: There was a kyng
That hyght Seyes/and had a wyfe
The beste that myght beare lyfe
And this quene hyght Alcyone
So it befyl/therafter sone
This kyng wol wenden ouer see
To tellen shortly/whan that he
Was in the see/thus in this wyse
Suche a tempest gan to ryse
That braste her maste/and made it fal
And cleft her shyp/and dreynt hem al
That neuer was founde/as it telles
Bodie ne man/ne nothyng elles
Right thus this kyng Seyes loste his lyfe
Nowe for to speke of Alcyone his wyfe
This lady that was left at home
Hath wonder/that the kyng ne come
Home/for it was a longe terme
Anon her herte began to yerne
And for that her thought euermo
It was not wele/her thought so
She longed so after the kyng
That certes it were a pytous thyng
To tel her hertely sorowful lyfe
That she had/this noble wyfe
For him alas/she loued alderbest
Anon she sent bothe est and west
To seke him/but they founde nought
Alas (quod she) that I was wrought
And wher my lorde my loue he dwelle
Certes I nyl neuer gete elles
I make a vow to my god here
But I mowe of my lorde here
Such sorowe for this lady to her tok
That trewly/I that made this booke

Had suche pyte/and suche routhe
To rede her sorowe/that by my trouthe
I sarde the worse al the morowe
After to thynken on her sorowe
So whan this lady coude here no worde
That no man myght fynde her lorde
Ful ofte she swowned/ and sayd alas
For sorowe/ sul nighe woode she was
Ne she coude no rede but one
But downe on knees she sate anone
And wepte/that pyte was to here
A mercy swete lady dere
(Quod she) to Juno her goddesse
Helpe me out of this distresse
And yeue me grace my lorde to se
Soone/ or wete where so he be
Or how he fareth/or in what wyse
And I shal make you sacrifyse
And holy yours become I shal
With good wyl/body/herte and al
And but thou wolte this/lady swete
Sende me grace to slepe and mete
In my slepe some certayne swevyn
Where through that I may knowe euyn
Whether my lorde be quicke or deed
With that worde she hynge downe the heed
And fel in a swoune/ as colde as stone
Her women caught her vp anone
And brought her in bed al naked
And she forwoped and forwaked
Was wery/and thus the deed slepe
Fel on her/ or she tooke kepe
Through Juno/ that had herde her boone
That made her to slepe soone
For as she prayde/right so was don
In dede/for Juno right anon
Called thus her messangere
To do her erande/ and he come nere
Whan he was come/she bad hym thus
Go bet(quod Juno) to Morpheus
Thou knowest hym wel/ the god of slepe
Nowe vnderstande wel/and take kepe
Saye thus on my halfe/ that he
Go fast in to the great see
And byd hym that on al thynge
He take vp Seys body the kynge
That lyeth ful pale/ and nothynge rody
Byd hym crepe in to the body
And do it gone to Alcyone
The queue/ there she lyeth alone
And shewe her shortly al in no nay
How it was dreynt this other day
And do the body spede right so
Right as it was woned to do
The whyles that it was alyue
Go nowe fast/ and hye the blyue.
This messanger took leue and wente
Vpon his way/ and neuer he stente
Tyl he came to the darke valey
That stante betwene rockes hwey
There neuer yet grewe corne ne gras
Ne tree/ne naught that ought was
Dersl ne may/ ne nought elles
Saue that there were a fewe welles
Came rennynge fro the clyffes adowne
That made a deedly slepynge sowne
And rennen downe right by a caue
That was vnder a rocke ygraue
Amyd the valey wonder depe
There these goddes lay aslepe
Morpheus and Ecymapasiepe
That was the god of slepes heyre
That slepte/ and dyd none other werke
This caue was also as derke
As hel pyte/ ouer al aboute
They had good leyser for to route
To vyte who myght slepe best
Some hynge her chynne vpon her brest
And slepte vpright her heed phed
And some lay naked in her bed
And slepte whyles theyr dayes last
This messanger come rennyng fast
And cryed ho ho/ awake anone
It was for nought/ there herde hym none
Awake (quod he) who lyeth there
And bleweth hys horne right in her eare
And cryed awaketh wonder hye
This god of slepe/ with his one eye
Lyft vp/and asked who clepeth there
Iram I (quod this messangere)
Juno bade thou shuldest gone
And tolde hym what he shulde done
As I haue tolde you here before
It is no nede reherse it more
And wente his way whan he had sayde
Anone this god of slepe awayde

Out

Out of his slepe and gan to go
And dyd as he had bydde hym do
Toke vp the dede body soone
And bare it fro the to Alcione
Hys wyfe the quene/there as she lay
Right euen a quarter before day
And stode right at her beddes fete
And called her right as she shete
By name/ and sayd: My swete wyfe
Awake/let be youre sorowful lyfe
For my your sorowe/there lyth no rede
For certes swete lone/I am but dede
Ye shal me neuer on lyue se
But good swete herte that ye
Bury my body/for suche a tyde
Ye may we it fynde/the see besyde
And farewel swete/my worldes blysse
I praye god youre sorowe lysse
Ye shal me whyle our blysse lasteth
With that her eyen vp she casteth
And sawe naught/alas (quod she) for sorowe
And dyed within the thyrde morowe
But what she sayd more my that sorowe
I may nat tel you as nowe
It were to longe for to dwel
My spirit matere I wyl you tel
Wherfore I haue tolde this thynge
Of Alcione/and Seys the kynge
For thus moche dare I say wel
I had be dolorey euerydel
And dred/ right thurgh defaute of slepe
If I ne had red/and take kepe
Of this tale nexte before
And I wyl tel you wherfore
For I ne myght for bote ne bale
Slepe/ or I had redde this tale
Of this dreynte Seys the kynge
And of the goddes of slepynge
Whan I had red this tale wele
And ouerlooked it euerydele
Me thought wonder/if it were so
For I had neuer herde spoke or tho
Of no goddes/that coude make
Men to slepe/ne for to wake
For I ne knewe neuer god but one
And in my game/I sayd anone
And yet me lyst ryght euyl to play
Rather than that I shulde dey

Thurgh defaute of slepynge thus
I wolde gyue thylke Morpheus
Or that goddesse dame Juno
Or some wyght els/I ne rought who
To make me slepe/and haue some rest
I wyl gyue hym the alther best
peste/that euer he abode his lyue
And here onwarde/ rygh no we as blyue
If he wol make me slepe a lyte
Of downe of pure dowues whyte
I wol gyue hym a fether bed
Raped with golde/ and right wel cled
In fyne blacke Satyn doutremere
And many a pylowe/and euery bere
Of clothe of raynes to slepe on softe
Hym thare nat nede to tourne ofte
And I wol peue hym al that falles
To his chambre and to his halles
I wol do paynte with pure golde
And tappyte hem ful many folde
Of one suite this shal he haue
If I wyst where were his caue
If he can make me slepe sone
As dyd the goddesse/ quene Alcione
And thus thus pray god Morpheus
May wynne of me no fees thus
Than euer he wanne/and to Juno
That is his goddesse/I shal so do
I trowe that she shal holde her payde.
I had vnneth that worde psayde
Right thus as I haue tolde you
That sodenly I myst howe
Suche a lust anone me tooke
To slepe/that right vpon my booke
I sel a slepe/ and therwith euen
We matte so inly suche a swouen
So wonderful/ that neuer yet
I trowe no man had the wyt
To conne wel my swouen rede
No nought Joseph without drede
Of Egypte/he that rad so
The kynges metynge Pharao
No more than coude the lest of vs
Ne nat scarsly Warrobeus
He that wrote al the auyson
That he met kynge Scipion
The noble man the Affrican
Suche meruayles fortuned than

I trowe a rede my dremes euery
Lo thus it was/ this was my swenyng.
The thought thus/ that it was Maye
And in the dawynge there I lay
The met thus in my bed al naked
And lokyd southe/ for I was waked
With smale foules a great hepe
That had affrayed me out of my slepe
Through noyse/ and swetnesse of her songe.
And as me met/ they sate amonge
Upon my chambre rofe without
Upon the tyles ouer al about
And euery/ the songe in his wyse
The most solempne seruyse
Be note/ that euer may I trowe
Had herde/ fat some of hem songe lowe
Some hygh/ and al of one accorde
To tel shortly al o woorde
Was neuer herde so swete steuen
But it had be a thynge of heuen
So mery a sowne/ so swete entunes
That certes for the towne of Tewnes
I nolde/ but I had herde hem synge
For al my chambre gan to ryng
Throughe syngynge of her armony
For instrument/ nor melody
Was no where herde/ yet halfe so swete
Nor of acorde halfe so mete
For there was none of hem that fayned
To synge/ for eche of hem hym payned
To synde out many crafty notes
They ne spared nat her throtes
And sothe to sayne/ my chambre was
Ful wel depaynted/ and with glas
Were al the wyndowes/ wel yglased
Ful clere/ and nat an hole ycrased
That to beholde it was great ioy
For holly al the storye of Troy
Was in the glasynge ywrought thus
Of Hector/ and of Kynge Priamus
Of Achylles/ and of Kynge Lamedon
And eke of Medea/ and of Jason
Of Paris/ Helyne/ and of Lavyne
And al the walles with colours fyne
Were paynte/ bothe text and glose
And al the Romaunce of the rose
My wyndowes were shet echone
And thrughe the glasse the sonne shone
Upon my bedde with bryght bemes
With many glad gilly stremes
And eke the welkyn was fayre
Blewe/ bryght/ clere was the ayre
And ful attempre/ for sothe it was
For neyther to hote/ ne cold it nas
Ne in al the welkyn was no cloude
And as I lay thus wonder lowde
Me thought I herde an hunte blowe
Tassay his great horne/ and for to knowe
Whereof it was came/ of house of stowte
And I herde goynge bothe hym and towte
Bothe/ horse/ houndes/ and other thynge
And al may I speke of huntynge
How they wolde slee the harte with strengthe
And how the herte had hym long
So mache ytraysed/ I not nowe what
Anone ryght as I herde that
How that they wolde/ on huntynge gone
I was ryght glad/ and hym amone
Toke my horse/ and sothe I wente
Out of my chambre/ I neuer stente
Tyl I came to the felde without
There ouer lode I a grete route
Of hunters/ and eke of forestiers
And many relayes and lymers
And hyed hem to the forest fast
And I with hem/ so at the last
I asked one ladde/ a lymere
Say felowe/ who shal hunte here
(Quod I) and he answered ayen
Syr/ the Emperour Octovyen
(Quod he) and is here fast by
A goddes halfe/ in good tyme (quod I)
Go we fast/ and gan to ryde
Whan we come to the forest syde
Every man dyd ryght soone
As to huntynge fel to doone
The mayster hunte/ anone fote hote
With his horne blewe three mote
At the vncouplynge of his houndes
Within a whyle/ the herte founde is
Yhalowed/ and rechased fast
Longe tyme/ and so at the last
This herte rowsed and stale away
Fro al the houndes a passyng way
The houndes fel out of sight ychone al
And were lyen at defaute ful

That

Therwith the haute/wonder faste
Barke a forloyn at the laste
I was go walked fro my me
And as I went/there came by me
A whelpe/that fawned me as I stode
That had yfoted wode and rande me goode
It came and crepte to me as lowe
Right as it had me yknowe
Hade do my fote fode/and wayned his wrath
And layde al swoothe be me his herte
I wolde fayne caught it anone
It fledde/and was fro me gone
And I him folowed/and at laste I went
Downe by a floury grene it went
Ful thycke of grasse/ful softe and swete
With floures fele/faire vnder fete
And lyte I vsed/it fareth thus
For bothe I forgat/and repented me
Thy two/that make flourys growe
Had made her dwellyng there I trowe
For it was wele to beholde
It thought the erthe trewe welde
To be gayer than the herry
To haue mo flourys/suche store
As in the welkyn sterre is
I had forget the pourtre
That wynter/through his colde mastrees
Had made it suffre/and his sorowes
It was forpyne/and that was pytie
For al the woode was wayne grene
Withtesse of bewe/had made it wayne
It is no nede eke for to saye
Where there were many grene greues
Of thycke of trewes ful of leaues
And euery tree stode by hym selue
Fro other/wele ten foote or twelue
So great were/so huge of strength
Of stocky or fyfty fadome length
Cleane without bowe or stycke
With croppes brode/and eke as thycke
They were not an inche a sonder
That it was shadde ouer al vnder
And many an haut/and many an hynde
Was bothe before me/and behynde
Of fawnes/sowres/buckes/does
Was ful the wodde/and many roes
And many squyrrelles/that sate
Ful hygh vpon the trees and ate

And in her manere made festes
Ioyfully/it was so ful of beestes
That thought me/the noble countrey
Gate to rejoyse my herte aywey
And reuen wyth his pyquere tre
For by the pyquere nature of hee
If they be trusty/reuen and nombre
And tell of euery thyng the nombre
Yet shulde he fayle to reuen euery
The wonders me met in my swemen
But forthe I rowed/right wonder faste
Downe the woode/so at the laste
I was ware of a man in blacke
That sate/and had yturned his backe
To an oke/an huge tree
Lorde thought I/who may that be
What eyleth him to sytten here
Anon right/I went nere
Than founde I sytte/euen vpright
A wonder welfarynge knyght
By the maner me thought so
Of good moode/and right ponge therto
Of the age of fourre and twenty yere
Vpon his herde/but sytel herre
And he was clothed al in blacke
I stalked euen vnto his backe
And there I stode/as stil as ought
The sothe to say/he sawe me nought
For why he pynge his herd ebe wne
And with a deedly/sorouful sowne
He made of ryme/ten verses or twelue
Of a complaynt/to hym selue
The moste pyte/the moste routhe
That euer I herde/for by my trouthe
It was great wonder that nature
Wyght suffre any creature
To haue suche sorowe/and he not deed
Ful pytous pale/and nothyng reed
He sayd a lay/a maner songe
Without note/without songe
And was this/for ful wele I can
Reherse it/right thus it began
I haue of sorowe so great wone
That ioye gette I neuer none
Nowe that I se my lady bright
Whiche I haue loued/withal my myght
In so me herte/and hath my
And thus in fantasye/sate me alone

Also

Alas dethe/what eyleth the
That thou noldest haue taken me
Whan that thou toke my lady swete
Of al goodnesse/she had none mete
That was so fayre/so fresshe/so fre
So good/that men may wel se
Whan he had made this his complaynte
His sorouful herte/gan faste faynte
And his spyrites wexen dede
The bloode was flede/for pure drede
Do wite to his herte/to maken him warme
For wel it feled the herte had harme
To wete eke/why it was adradde
Ey spredt/and for to make it gladde
For it is membre principal
Of the body/and that made al
His hewe chaunge/and wexe grene
And pale/for there no bloode is sene
In no maner lymme of his
Anon therwith/whan I sawe this
He sarde thus yuel/there he sete
I went and stode right at his fete
And grette him/but he spake nought
But argued with his owne thought
And in his wytte/disputed faste
Why/and how his lyfe might laste
Him thought his sorowes were so smerte
And lay so colde vpon his herte
So through his sorowe/and holy thought
Made hym that he herde me nought
For he had welnye loste his mynde
Though Pan/that men clepeth god of kynde
Werk for his sorowes neuer so wrothe
But at the laste/to sayne right sothe
He was ware of me/how I stoode
Before him/and dyd of my hoode
And had ygret him/as I best coude
Debonairly/and nothyng loude
He sayd/I pray the be not wrothe
I herde the not/to sayne the sothe
Ne I sawe the not/sir trewly
Ah good sir/no force (quod I)
I am right sory/if I haue ought
Distroubled you/out of your thought
Forgeue me/if I haue my sse take
Yes/thamenden is lyght to make
(Quod he) for there lyeth none therto
There is nothyng mysseydemen so
Lo how goodly spake this knyght
As it had be another wyght
And made it neyther tough ne queynt
And I sawe that/and gan me aqueynt
With him/and founde him so tretable
Right wonder skylful/and reasonable
As me thought/for al his bale
Anon right/I gan fynde a tale
To hyre/to loke where I might ought
Haue more knowleging of his thought
Sir (quod I) this game is done
I holde that thus herte be gone
These huntes can him no where se
I do no force therof (quod he)
My thought is therin neuer a dele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
Right so me thynketh by your chere
But sir/so thyng wol ye here
Me thynketh in great sorowe I you se
But certes sir/if that ye
Wolde aught discure me your wo
I wolde/as wyse god helpe me so
Amende it/if I can or may
Ye how we proue it by assay
For by my trouthe/to make you hole
I wil do al my power hole
And telleth me/of your sorowes smerte
Parauenture it may ease your herte
That semeth ful yrke vnder your syde
With that he loked on me a syde
As who saythe nay/that wyl not be
Graunt mercy good frende (quod he)
I thanke the/that thou woldest so
But it may neuer the rather be do
No man may my sorowe glade
That maketh my hewe to fal and fade
And hath myn vnderstandyng lorne
That me is wo/that I was borne
Way naught make my sorowes slyde
Not al the remedyes of Ouyde
Ne Orpheus/god of melodye
Ne Dedalus/with his playes slye
Ne hele me/may no phisycien
Naught Ipocras/ne Galyen
Me is wo/that I your hoerte touche
But who so wol assay him selue
Whether his herte can haue pyte
Of any sorowe/lette him se me

I wrotte

I writhe/that dethe hath made al naked
Of al the hyfse that euer was masked
I wrothe/ wurste of al wightes
That hate my dayes/ and my nightes
Hy syse/ my lustes/lo me lothe
For al sare and I be wrothe
The pure deth is so ful my foe
That I wolde dye/it wyl nat so
For whan I folowe it/it wyl flye
I wolde haue hym/it nyl nat me
Thus is payne without reed
Alway dyenge/and be nat deed
That Tesyphus that lyeth in hel
May nat of more sorowe tel
And who so wyste al/ by my trouthe
Hy sorowe/but he had routhe
And ppte of my sorowes smerte
That may hath a fendely herte
For who so seeth me furst on morowe
May sayne he hath mette with sorowe
For I am sorowe/and sorowe is I
Alas/and I wyl tel the why
Hy sorowe is turned to playnyng
And al my laughter to wepyng
Hy glad thoughtes/to heuynesse
In trauayle is myn ydelnesse
And ese my rest/my welle is wo
Hy good is harme/and euermo
In wrathe is turned my playeng
And my delyte in to sorowyng
Hyn heale is turned in to sickenesse
In derke is al my sybernesse
To derke is turned al my syght
Hy wytte is folye/ my day is nyght
Hy lone is hate/my ese wasyng
Hy mirthe and mete/is fastyng
Hy countenaunce is nyerte
And al abawed/where so I be
Hy peace pleding/ and in werre
Alas/ howe might I fare werre
Hy boldenesse is turned to shame
For false fortune hath played a game
At the Cheese with me/alas the whyle
The trayterresse false/and ful of gyle
That al behoteth/and nothyng halte
She goeth vpright/and yet she halte
That begyng fayre/and endeth foule
The dysplayeth behemayne
That semeth many a creature
At poole of false portrayture
In she/for she wol sone wary
She is the monsires heed pvuery
As sythe/ouer ystrowed with flowres
Her mosie worshyp and her floures
To spey/for that is her nature
Without lawe/ or mesure
She false is/and euer laughyng
With one eye/ and that other wepyng
That is brought vp/she set al downe
I lykey her to the Scorpio wyne
That is a false flatterynge beest
For with his heed he maketh fest
But al amyd his flatterynge
With his tayle he wyl stynge
And enuenym/ and so wyl she
She is the enuyous charyte
That is aye false/ and semeth wele
So turneth she her false whele
About/for it is nothinge stable
Nowe by the syde/ nowe at table
Ful many one hath she thus pblent
She is playe of enchauntement
That semeth one/and is nat so
The false theefe/ what hath she do
I rowest thou/ by our lorde I wyl the say
At the Cheese with me she gan to play
With her false draughtes ful dyuers
She stale on me/ and tolde my feers
And whan I sawe my feers away
Alas/I couthe no lenger play
But sayd/fare wel swete pwys
And fare wel al that euer there is
Therwith fortune sayd/cherke here
And mate in the myddel poynte of pchesbere
With a paune errant/ alas
Ful crafty er to play she was
Than Athalus that made the game
First of the Cheese/ so was his name
But god wolde I had ones or twyse
Ironde/ and sene we the iroperdyse
That ronde the Grete Pithagores
I shulde haue playde the bet at ches
And kepte my feers the bet therby
And thoughte therto/ for truely
I holde that wysshe nat worth a fire
If had be neuer the bet for me

For

For fortune can so many a wyse
There be but fewe/can her begyle
And eke she is the lasse to blame
Wy selfe I wolde haue do the same
Before god/had I ben as she
She ought the more excused be
For this I say/yet more therto
Had I be god/and myght haue do
Wy wyl/whan she my seere caught
I wolde haue drawe the same draught
For al so wyse/god gyue me rest
I dare wel swere/she toke the best
But throughe that draught I haue lorne
Wy blysse/alas that I was borne
For euermore I trowe truely
For al my wyl/my lust holy
Is tourned/but ye/what to done
Wy our lorde it is to dye sone
For nothynge I leaue it nought
But syue and dye/right in this thought
For there nys planet in firmament
Ne in ayre ne in erthe none element
That they ne yeue me a yefte echone
Of wrynge whan I am alone
For whan that I aduyse me wele
And bethynke me euery dele
Howe that there lyeth in rekenynge
In my sorowe for nothynge
And howe there lyueth no gladnesse
Way glad me of my dystresse
And howe I haue lost suffysaunce
And therto I haue no plesaunce
Than may I say/I haue right nought
And whan al this falleth in my thought
Alas/than am I ouercome
For that is don/is nat to come
I haue more sorowe than Tantale
And whan I herde hym tel this tale
Thus pytuously/as I you tel
Vnnethe myght I lenger dwel
It dyd myne herte so morche wo
A good syr (quod I) say nat so
Haue some pyte on your nature
That formed you to creature
Remembreth you of Socrates
For he ne counted nat thre strees
Of nought that fortune conde do
No (quod he) I can nat so
Why so good syr/yes perde (quod I)
Ne say not so/for truely
Though ye had lost the fayrest welue
And ye for sorowe murdred your selue
Ye shulde be dampned in this case
Wy as good right as Medea was
That slough her chyldren for Jason
And Phylis also/for Demophon
Hynge her selfe/so wela way
For he had broke his terme day
To come to her: Another rage
Had Dido/the quene eke of Cartage
That slough her selfe/for Eneas
Was false/whiche a foole she was:
And Ecquo dyed/for Narcisus
Nolde nat loue her/and right thus
Hath many another sely done
And for Dalida dyed Sampson
That slough hym selfe with a pyllere
But there is no man alyue here
Wolde for her sorow make this wo
Why so (quod he) it is nat so
Thou wotest ful sytel what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
Howe that may be (quod I)
Good syr/tel me al holy
In what wyse/howe/why/and wherfore
That ye haue thus your blysse lore
Blythely (quod he) come syt doun
I tel the vpon a condycyoun
That thou shalte holy with al thy wyt
Do thyne entente to herken it
Yes syr: Swerr thy trouth therto
Gladly do than holde here to
I shal right blythely/so god me saue
Holy with al the wyt I haue
Here you as wel as I can
A godden halse (quod he) and began
Syr (quod he) syth first I couthe
Haue any maner wyt ne youthe
Or yndely vnderstandynge
To comprehende in any thynge
What sowne was/in myne owne wyt
Dredelesse I haue euer yet
Be trybutary/and yeue rente
To loue holy/with good entente
And throughe plesaunce/became his thral
With good wyl/body/herte and al

At the

All this I put in his seruage
As to my lorde/and dyd homage
And ful deuoutely I prayde hym to
He shulde helpe myn herte so
That it plesaunter to hym were
And worshyp to my lady dere
And thus was songe/and many a yere
(Er that myn herte was set elwhere)
That I dyd thus/and nyste why
I trowe it came me sykerly
Paraunter I was therto moste able
As a whyte wal/or a table
Or it is redy to fetche and take
Al that men wyl therin make
Whether so men wol portrey or paynte
Be the werkes neuer so quaynte.
And thylke tyme I fared right so
I was able to haue lerned tho
And to haue conde/as wel or better
Paraunter/ eyther arte or letter
But for some came first in my thought
Therfore I forgate it nought
I cheres some to my first craft
Therfore it is with me laft
For why/ I toke it of so ponge age
That malyce had my corage
Not that tyme/turned to no thyng
Though to mokel vnto wlegyng
For that tyme/pouthe my maystresse
Gouerned me in ydelnesse
For it was in my first youthe
And tho ful lytel good I couthe
For al my werkes were flyttyng
That tyme/and al my thought varyeng
As were to me ylyke goode
That I knewe tho/ but thus it stode.
It happed that I came on a day
In to a place/there that I sey
Ryche wyb the fayrest compayne
Of ladyes/that euer man with eye
Had seue togyders in o place
Shal I clepe it happe/eyther grace
That brought me there/not but fortune
That in to eyen ful commune
The false traytresse perueyse
God wolde I couthe clepe her werse
For now she woldeth me ful wo
And I wot neuer why so.
Amonge these ladyes thus echone
Sothe to sayne/I sawe one
That was lyke none of the route
For I dare swere/ without doute
That as the somers sonne bryght
Is fayrer/clerer/and hath more lyght
Than any other planet in heuen
The moone/or the sterres seuen
For al the worlde/so had she
Surmounted hem al of beaute
Of maner/and of comlynesse
Of stature/and of wel set gladnesse
Of goodlyhede/and so wel vesey
Shortly/what shal I more sey
Dy god and by his halowes twelue
It was my swete/right al her selue
She had so stedfast countenaunce
So noble porte/and mayntenaunce
And Loue/that wel herde my bone
Had espyed me thus sone
That she ful sone in my thought
As helpe me god/so was I cought
So sodaynly/that I ne toke
No maner counsayle/but at her loke
And at myn herte/ for why her eyen
So gladly I trowe myn herte seyne
That purely tho/myn owne thought
Sayd/ it were better serue her for nought
Than with another to be wele
And it was sothe/for euerydele
I wyl anon right tel the why
I sawe her daunce so comely
Carol and synge so swetely
Laughe/and playe so womanly
And loke so debonairly
So goodly speke and so frendly
That certes I trowe that neuermore
Nas seue so vlyssful a trefore
For euery heer on her heed
Sothe to saye it was not reed
Ne neyther yelowe ne broune it nas
Me thought most lyke golde it was
And whiche eyen my lady had
Debonayre/ good/ glad/ and sad
Symple/of good mokel/not to wyde
Therto her loke nas nat asyde
Ne ouerthwart/ but beset so wele
Ye durste wel and loke vpon euerydele

Al this

Al that on her gan beholde
Her eyen semed gnone she wolde
Haue mercy/ folly wenden so
But it was neuer the rather do
It nas no countrefeted thynge
It was her owne pure lokynge
That the goddesse dame Nature
Had made hem open by measure
And close/ for were she neuer so glad
Her lokynge was nat folyche spread
Ne wyldely/though that she playde
But euer me thought her eyen sayde
By god my wrath is al forgeue
Therwith her syst so wel to syue
That dulnesse was of her a dread
She nas to sobre ne to glad
In al thynges more measure
Had neuer I trowe creature
But many one with her lose she herte
And that sate her ful lytel at herte
For she knewe nothynge of her thought
But whether she knewe/ or knewe it nought
Algate she ne rought of hem a stree
To gete her loue no nere nas he
That woned at hom/ than he in Inde
The soumest was alway behynde
But good folke ouer al other
She loued/ as man may do his brother
Of whiche loue she was wonder large
In stedful places that bere charge
But whiche a vysage had she therto
Alas my herte is wonder wo
That I ne can discriuen it
Me lacketh bothe Englysshe and wyt
For to vndo it at the ful
And eke my spyrytes ben so dul
So grete a thynge for to deuyse
I haue no wyt that can suffise
To comprehende her beaute
But thus moche I dare sayn that she
Was whyte/ rody/ fresshe/ and lyuely hewed
And euery day her beaute newed
And nyghe her face was alderbest
For certes nature had suche lest
To make that sayst/ that truely she
Was her chefe patron of beaute
And chefe ensample of al her werke
And mouster/ for be it neuer so derke
Me thynketh I se her comme
And yet mote ouer/ though al tho
That eller hued/ were no we a lyue
Ne wolde haue sounde to discryue
In al her facyn wicked signe
For it was sad/ symple/ and benigne
And suche a goodly swete speche
Had that swete/ my lyues leche
So frendly/ and so wel ygrounded
Vpon al reason/ so wel pfounded
And so tretable to al good
That I dare swere wel by the rood
Of eloquence was neuer sounde
So swete a sownyng facounde
Ne trewer tonged/ ne scorned lasse
Ne bet coulde heale: That by the masse
I durste swere/ though the Pope it songe
That there was neuer yet/ though her tonge
Han ne woman greatly harmyd
As for her/ was al harme hyd
Ne lasse flatteryng in her worde
That purely her symple terende
Was sounde as trewe as any bonde
Or trouthe/ of any mannes honde
Ne chyde she coulde neuer a dele
That knoweth al the worlde ful wele
But suche a sapyentesse of a nesse
Had that swete/ that none nor bierde
Nas there none sene/ that myssatte
It was whyte/ smothe/ streyght/ & pure flatte
Without hole/ or cauel bone
And by semyng/ she had none
Her throte/ as I haue now memoire
Semed as a rounde tour of yuoire
Of good greatnesse/ and not to grete
And sayst whyter she hete
That was my ladyes name right
She was therto sayst and knyght
She had not her name wrongt
Right sayst sholdere/ and body longe
She had/ and armes euery dele
Fatly/ she flesshy/ nat great therwith
Right whyte handes/ and nayles rede
Rounde brestes: And of good brede
Her hyppes were/ a streight flatte backe
I knewe on her none other lacke
That al her symmes were pure selyng
In as fere as I had knowyng.

Thus

Therto she coulde so wel playe
What that her lyst/ that I dare saye
That was lyke to worthe sought
That euery man may taste of ought
Inough/ and it hath neuer the lesse
Of maner and of cosynesse
Right so farde my lady here
For euery whyght of her maners
Myght cat[illegible] inough/ of that he wolde
If he had eyen her to beholde
For I dare swere wel/ if that she
Had amonge ten thousande be
She wolde haue be at the beste
A chefe myrour of al the feste
Though they had stonde in a rowe
To mesure eyen/ that coulde haue knowe
For whers so men had playde/ or waged
She thought the felaushyp as naked
Without her/ that I sawe ones
As a crowne without stones
Truely she was to myn eye
The soleyn Fenix of Arabye
For there ly[illegible]th neuer but one
Lik suche as she/ ne knowe I none
To speke of goodnesse/ truely she
Had as moche debonayre
As euer had Hester in the Byble
And more/ if more were possyble
And sothe to saye/ therwithal
She had a wyt[illegible] so general
To euery creature to al goode
That al her wytte was set by the roode
Without malyce/ vpon gladnesse
And certes I sawe neuer yet a lesse
Harmful/ thoy she was ry boyng
I sey not that she ne had knowyng
What harme was/ or els she
Had coulde no good/ so th[illegible] me
And truely/ for to speke of trouthe
But she had had/ it had be routhe
Therof she had so moche her dele
And I dare saye/ and swere it wele
That trouthe thy self/ generall and al
Had chose the mayster principal
Of her/ that was the vertuous place
Vnto she had the myght grace
To knowe thoroughly perfytly euery
Thy self without peradventure

That euer I sawe/ or wyste yet
So pure suffraunt was her wytte
And reason gladly she vnderstoode
It semed wel/ she coulde goode
She vsed gladly to do wele
These were her maners euerydele
Therwith she loued so wel right
She wrought no wolde to no wight
No wight myght do her no shame
She loued so wel her owne name
Her lust to holde no wight in honde
Ne be thou syker/ she wolde not fonde
To holde no wight in balaunce
By false worde/ ne by countenaunce
But if men wolde vpon her lye
Ne sende men in to Walachye
To Pruyse/ and to Tartarie
To Alisaundre/ ne in to Turkie
And bydde him haste/ anon that he
Go hoodlesse in to the due see
And come home by the Carrenare
And sir/ be now we right ware
That I may of you here sayne
Worshyp/ or that ye come agayne
She ne vsed no suche knackes smale
But therfore that I tel my tale
Right on this same/ I haue sayde
Was holy al my lowe sayde
For certes she was that swete wyfe
Thy sufferaunce/ my lyfe/ my lyfe
Thy hope/ myn heale/ and al blesse
Thy worldes welfare/ and my goddesse
And I holy here/ and euerydele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
Harkly your lowe was wel beset
I not how ye myght haue do bet
Bet/ ne not so wel (quod she)
I trowe sir (quod I) parde.
Nay leue it wel: Sir so do I
I leue you wel/ that trewly
You thought that she was the beste
And to beholde/ the alder fayreste
Who so had loked her with your eyen:
Whi[illegible] myn/ nay al that her seyen
Sayd and swore/ it was so
And thoughe they ne had/ I wolde tho
Haue loued best my lady fre
Thoughe I had had al the beaute

That euer had Alcippades
And al the strength of Hercules
And therto had the worthynesse
Of Alisaundre/and al the ryches
That euer was in Babiloyne
In Cartage/or in Macedoyne
Or in Rome/or in Nynyue
And therto al so hardy be
As was Hector/so haue I ioye
That Achilles slough at Troye
And therfore was he slayne also
In a temple/for bothe two
Were slayne/he and Antilegius
And so sayth the Dares Frigius
For loue of Polixena
Or hey as wyse as Minerua
I wolde euer/without drede
Haue loued her/ for I muste nede
Nede: nay trewly I gabbe nowe
Naught nede/and I wol telley howe
For of good wyl myn herte it wolde
And eke to loue her/ I was holde
As for the fayrest and the beste
She was as good/so haue I reste
As euer was Penelope of Grece
Or as the noble wyse Lucrece
That was the beste/he telleth thus
The romayne Tytus Lyuius
She was as good/and nothyng lyke
Though her stones be autentyke
Algate she was as trewe as she
But wherfore that I tel the
Whan I first my lady sey
I was right ponge/sothe to say
And ful great nede I had to lerne
Whan myn herte wolde yerne
To loue it was a great empryse
But as my wytte wolde beste suffyse
After my ponge rakelesly wyt
Without drede I beset it
To loue her in my best wyse
To do her worshyp/and the seruyse
That I coude tho/ by my trouthe
Without fayntyng/ eyther slouthe
For wonder fayne/I wolde her se
So mokel it amended me
That whan I sawe her a non to me
I was warysshed of al my sore me
Of alday after/tyl it were eue
Me thought nothyng myght me greue
Were my sore neuer so smerte
And yet she sat so in myn herte
That by my trouthe/ I nolde naught
For al this worlde/out of my thought
Leaue my lady/no trewly
Nowe by my trouthe sir (quod I)
Me thynketh ye haue suche a chaunce
As stante/without repentaunce
Repentaunce/nay sye (quod he)
Shulde I nowe repente me
To some/nay certes than were I wel
Werse than was Achytofel
Or Antenor/so haue I ioye
The traytour that betrayed Troye
Or the false Genellon
He that purchased the trayson
Of Rouslande/and of Dyuers
Nay/whyle I am a lyue here
I nyl forsyt her neuer mo
Nowe good sir (quod I) tho
Ye haue wel tolde me here before
It is no nede to reherse it more
Nowe ye sawe her first/and where
But wolde ye tel me the maniere
To her/ whiche was your first speche
Therof I wolde you beseche
And how she knewe fyrst your thought
Whether ye loued her/or nought
And telleth me eke/what ye haue lore
I herde you tel here before
Ye sayd/thou nost what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
What losse is that (quod I tho)
Nyl she not loue you/ is it so
Or haue ye aught done amys
That she hath lefte you/is it this
For goddes loue tel me al
Before god (quod he) and I shal
I say right as I haue sayde
Do her wote al my loue layde
And yet she nyst it not neuer a deale
Not longe tyme/sens it wexe
For be right sykes/I durst naught
For al this worlde/tel her my thought
Ne I wolde haue wonted her fro me
For wyste thou why/she was coy

Of the body that had the herte
And who so hath that may not asterte
But for to kepe me fro pdelesse
Trewly I dyd my busynesse
To make songes as I best coude
And ofte tyme I songe hem loude
And made songes/this a great dele
Although I coude not make so wele
Songes/ne knewe the arte al
As coude Lamekes sonne Tubal
That founde out first the arte of songe
For as his brothers hameres ronge
Upon his anuelt vp and downe
Therof he toke the first sowne
Out greekes sayne of Pithagoras
That he the first fynder was
Of the arte/Austyn telleth so
But therof no force of hem two
Agates songes thus I made
Of my selfyng/myn herte to glade
And so/this was aither first
I not where it were the werst
I olde it maketh myne herte lyghte
Whan I thynke on that swete wyghte
That is so femely on to se
And wysshe to god it might so be
That she wolde holde me for her knyghte
Hy lady/that is so fayre and bryghte
Nowe haue I tolde the/sothe to say
My first songe vpon a day
I bethought me what wo
And sorowe that I suffred tho
For her/and yet she wyst it nought
So tel her durst I not my thought
Alas thought I/I can no rede
And but I tel her/I am but dede
And if I tel her/to say right sothe
I am a dradde she wol be wrothe
Alas/what shal I than do
In this debate I was so wo
Yt thought myn herte brast alwayne
So at the laste/sothe for to sayne
I be thought me that Nature
Ne formed neuer in creature
So moche beaute trewly
And bountee/without mercy
In hope of that/my tale I tolde
Dyd sorowe/as that I neuer sholde
For nedes/and maugre myn heed
I muste haue tolde her for be deed
I not wel howe that I began
Ful pure reherce it I can
And ese as helpe me god withal
I trowe it was in the dismal
That was the ten woundes of Egypte
For many a worde I ouer slypte
In my tale for pure fere
Leste my wordes myssse set were
With sorouful herte/and woundes dede
Hoste and quaspng for pure drede
And shame/and flyntyng in my tale
For ferde/and myn hewe al pale
Ful ofte I weyt bothe pale and reed
Downg to her I hynge the heed
I durste not ones loke her on
For wyt/maner/and al was gone
I said: mercy/and no more
It nas no game/it sate me sore.
So at the laste/sothe to sayne
Whan that myn herte was come agayne
To tel shortly al my spethe
With hole herte/I gan her beseche
That she wolde be my lady swete
And sore/and hertely gan her hete
Euer to be stedfast and trewe
And soure her al way frendshyp newe
And neuer other lady haue
And al her worshyp for to saue
As I best coude/I swore her this
For youre is al that euer there is
For euermore/myn herte swete
And neuer to false you/but I mete
I nyl/as wyse god helpe me so
And whan I had my tale ydo
God wote she acompted not a fire
Of al my tale/so thought me
To tel shortly/right as it is
Trewly her answere it was this
I can not no we wel countrefete
Her wordes/but this was the grete
Of her answere/she sayd nay
Al utterly/alas that day
The sorowe I suffred and the wo
That trewly Cassandra/that so
Bewayled the destruction
Of Troye/and of Ilion

Ly tele ii Hed

Had never ſuche ſorowe as I tho
I durſt no more ſay therto
For pure feare/but ſtale away
And thus I lyued ful many a day
That trewly I had no nede
Ferther than my beddes hede
Neuer a day to ſeche ſorowe
I founde it redy euery morowe
For why/I loued her in no gere
So it befel another yere
I thought ones I wolde fonde
To do her knowe/and vnderſtonde
Wy wo/and ſhe wel vnderſtoode
That I ne wyned thyng but goode
And worſhyp/and to bepe her name
Ouer al thynges/and drede her ſhame
And was ſo buſy her to ſerue
And pyte were I ſhulde ſterue
Sythe that I wyned none harme ywis
So whan my lady knewe al this
Wy lady pawe me al holy
The noble yeft of her mercy
Sauyng her worſhyp by al wayes
Dredeleſſe/ I mene none other wayes
And therwith ſhe pawe me a ryngе
I trowe it was the firſt thyng
But if myn herte was ywaye
Glad/that it is no nede to aye
As helpe me god/ I was as blyue
Reyſed/as fro dethe to lyue
Of al happes the alder beſt
The gladdeſt/ and the moſte at reſt
For trewly that ſwete wight
Whan I had wronge/and ſhe the right
She wolde alway ſo goodly
Forpeue me ſo debonairly
In al my youthe/in al chaunce
She toke me in her gouernaunce
Therwith ſhe was alway ſo trewe
Our ioy was euer ilyche newe
Our hertes wernе ſo euen a payre
That neuer nas that one contrayre
To that other/ for no wo
For ſothe ilyche they ſuffred tho
O blyſſe/ and eke o ſorowe bothe
Ilyche they were bothe glad and wrothe
Al was bo one/without were
And thus we lyued ful many a yere
So wel/ I can not tel howe.
Sir(quod I) where is ſhe nowe
Nowe (quod he) and ſtynte anone
Therwith he wepte as deed as ſtone
And ſayd/ alas that I was borne
That was the leſſe/that here before
I tolde the/ that I had lorne
Bethynke the howe I ſayd here beforne
Thou woſte ful lytel what thou menyſt
I haue loſte more than thou wenyſt
God wot alas/right that was ſhe
Alas ſir howe/what may that be
She is deed: Nay/ Yes by my trouthe
Is that your loſſe/by god it is routhe.
¶ And with that worde right anone
They gan to ſtrake forthe/al was done
For that tyme/the hart huntynge
With that me thought that this kynge
Gan homwarde for to ryde
Vnto a place was there beſyde
Whiche was from bo but a ſtyte
A longe caſtel with walles whyte
By ſaynt Johan/on a ryche hyl
As me mette/but thus it fyl
Right thus me mette/as I you tel
That in the caſtel there was a bel
As it had ſmytte houres twelue
Therwith I awoke my ſelue
And founde me lyeng in my bedde
And the boke that I had redde
Of Alcyone/and Deys the kyng
And of the goddes of ſlepyng
I founde it in myn honde ful euyn
Thought I/this is ſo queynt a ſweuyn
That I wolde by proceſſe of tyme
Fonde/to put this ſweuyn in ryme
As I can beſt/and that anone
This was my ſweuyn/nowe it is done.

¶ Explicit.

Wy maiſter &c. Whan of Chriſt our kyng
Was aſked/what is trouthe or ſothfaſtneſſe
He not a worde anſwerde to that aſkyng
As who ſayth/no man is al trewe I geſſe
And therfore/ though I hyght to cyprieſſe
The ſorowe and wo that is in marryage
I dare not write of it no wickednеſſe
Leſte I my ſelfe fal eſte in ſuche dotage

I wol

I wol not sayn how that it is the chayne
Of Sathenas/ on whiche he bynd with cure
But I dare sayne/ were he out of his payne
As by his wyl/ he wolde be bysy neuer
But thylke doted foole/ that eft his bond lenger
Ichaynch he/ than out of prison carpe
God set him neuer fro him wo disseuer
For no man kyn be wayle/ though he wepe

But yet lesse than no worse/ take a wyse
Bet is to wedde/ than bysy in worse wyse
Put ỹ shalt haue sore a wo thy flesh thy lyse
And ben thy wynes thral/ as sayn these wyse
And if that holy writte may not suffyse
Experyence shal the teache/ so may happe
Take thy way lener to be take in fryse
Than eft to fal of wedding in the trappe

This tytel writ/ proverbes or figures
I fynde you/ take hepe of it I rede
Vnwyse ne he/ that can no wele endure
If thou be fyker/ put the not in drede
The wyfe of Bathe/ I pray you that ye rede
Of this mater/ that we haue on honde
God graunt you your lyfe freely to lede
In fredome/ for foules us to be bonde.

¶ Explicit.

The assemble of Foules.

The lyfe so short/ ỹ craft so long to lerne
Thassay so harde/ so sharp the conquest
The dredful ioy/ alway ỹ flyt so yerne (ring
Al this meane I by loue/ that my felyng
Astonyeth/ with his wonderful werkyng
So sore ywys/ that when I on him thynke
Nought wote I wel/ whether I flete or synke

For al be that I/ know not loue in dede
Ne wot how that he quyteth folke her hyre
Yet happeth me ful oft in bokes rede
Of his myracles/ and of his cruel yre
Therfore I wel/ he wol be lorde and syre
I dare not fayne/ his frowes he forbere
But god forbede/ for such a lorde I can no mere

Of loue/ what sort lyue I/ what for yere
On bokes rede I ofte/ as I you tolde
But wherfore I studie al this/ naught yore
Agon/ it happed me to beholde
Vpon a boke/ was ywritten with letters olde
And therupon/ a certayne thyng to lerne
The longe day/ ful fast I radde and yerne

For out of olde feldes/ as men sayth
Cometh al this newe corne/ fro yere to yere
And out of olde bokes/ in good fayth
Cometh al this newe science/ that men lere
But now to purpose/ as of this matere
To rede forthe/ it gan me so delyte
That al that day/ me thought it but a lyte

This boke/ of whiche I make mencion
Entytled was right thus/ as I shal tel
Tullius/ of the dreame of Scipion
Chapiters seuen it had/ of heuen and hel
And erthe/ and soules that therin dwel
Of whiche/ as shortly as I can it treate
Of his sentence/ I wol you sayne the greate

First telleth it/ whan Scipion was come
In Affryke/ how he metyth Massynysse
That him for ioy/ in armes hath ynome
Than telleth he her spethe/ and al the blysse
That was bet wexe hem/ tyl ỹ day gan mysse
And how his auncestre Affrican so dere
Gan in his slepe that night tyl him apere

Than telleth it/ that from a sterry place
How Affrican hath him Cartage shewed
And warned him before me/ of al his grace
And sayd him what man/ lered eyther lewde
That loueth comune profyte/ wel ythewde
He shulde in to a blysful place wende
There as the ioye is without any ende.

Than asked he/ if folke that here ben dede
Haue lyfe/ and dwellyng in another place
And Affrican sayd ye/ without any drede
And how our present lyues space
Ment but a maner dethe/ what way we trace
And right ful folke/ shul gon after they dye
To heuen/ and shewed him the Galaxye

Than

Than shewed he him/ the lytel erthe þ here is
To regarde of the seuene quantytes
And after shewed he him the nyne speres
And after that the melodye herde he
That cometh of thilke speres thryse three
That welles of musyke ben/ and melodye
In this worlde here/ and cause of armonye

Than sayd he him/ sens erthe was so lyte
And ful of turment/ and of harde grace
That he ne shulde him in this worlde delyte
Than tolde he him/ in certayne peres space
That euery sterre/ shulde come in to his place
There it was first/ and al shuld out of mynde
That in this worlde is done/ of al mankynde

Than prayde him Scipion/ to tel him al
The way to come in to that heuen blysse
And he sayde: First know thy selfe immortal
And loke aye vesely/ that thou werche ⁊ wysse
To comune profyte/ and thou shalt not mysse
To come swyftly/ vnto that place dere
That ful of blysse is/ and of soules clere

And brekers of the lawe/ sothe to sayne
And lyberous folke/ after that they ben dede
Shul whirle about þ worlde/ alway in payne
Tyl many a worlde be passed/ out of drede
And than forgeuen al her wicked dede
Than shullen they come/ to that blyssful place
To whiche to comen/ god sende the grace.

The day gan fayle/ and the derke nyght
That reueth bestes from her besynesse
Beraste me my bokes for lacke of lyght
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse
Full spylled of thought/ and bely heuynesse
For bothe I had thyng/ whiche that I nolde
And eke I nad that thyng that I wolde

But fynally my spyrite at laste
For wery of my labour al that day
Toke rest/ that made me to slepe faste
And in my slepe I mette/ as that I lay
How we Affrikan/ right in the selfe aray
That Scipion him sawe/ before that tyde
Was come/ and stode right at my beddes syde

The wery hunter/ slepyng in his bedde
To wode ayen his mynde gothe anone
The iuste meneth/ how he his place shedde
The ranger rometh/ to se his dere gone
The eyther of golde/ þ nought sleth wyl his fone
The fyssher wayteth/ how the fysshes swymme
The louer mat/ he hath his lady wonne

Lay I not sayne/ if that the cause were
For I had rad de of Affrikan before
That made me to write that he stode there
But thus sayd he: thou hast the so wel bore
In lokyng of myn olde boke al to tore
Of whiche Macrobe raught not a lyte
That somdele of thy labour wolde I quyte

Citherea/ thou blyssful lady swete
That with thy fyre bryde/ dauntest whan þ lyst
That madest me this swenen for to mete
Be thou my helpe in this/ for thou mayst best
As wisely as I sergh the northe nouth west
Whan I began my swenen for to write
So yeue me myght/ to ryme it and endyte

This forsayd Affrikan me hente anone
And forthe with him to a gate brought
Right of a parke/ walled with grene stone
And ouer þ gate/ with letters large y wrought
There were verse y writen/ as me thought
Of ether halfe/ of ful great difference
Of whiche I shal you say/ the playn sentence

Thrugh me men gon in to that blyssful place
Of hertes heale/ and derkly woundes cure
Thrugh me men gon in to the wel of grace
There grene and lusty May/ shal euer endure
This is the way to al good auenture
Be glad thou reder/ and thy sorowe of caste
Al open am I/ passe in and spede the faste

Thrugh me men goon/ the spare þ other fyre
Vnto the mortal stroke of the sperre
Of whiche desdayne and daunger is the gyde
There neuer tree shal frute/ ne tymber bere
This stresse you bideth to the foresayd werre
There as the fyssh in prison is al dene
The ascapyng is onely the remedye

Tho

These verses of golde & asure ywritten were
Of which I gan astoned to beholde
for wonder that ouer mesure al my soule
And with that other gan my herte to colde
That out me sette/that other dyde me colde
So wyte had I/for errour for to chese
To entre at eye/or wit to sone or lese

Right as bytwene Adamantes two
Of stiffe wrought/a peece of yron set
Ne hath no might to moue to ne fro
for what that one may hale/that other let
So fared I/that I nyste where me was bet
To entre or leaue/for Affryan my gyde
The first and shonte vp/at the gates wyde

And sayd/it standeth wryten in thy face
Thine errour/though thou telle it nat me
But bode the nat/to come in to this place
for this wrytynge is nothynge ment by the
Ne by none/but he loues seruaunt be
for thou of loue/hast lost thy taste I gesse
As syck man hath/of swete and bytternesse

But nathelesse/although thou be dul
That thou canst nat so/yet mayst thou se
for many a man/that may nat stande a pul
yet speth it hym/at the wrestyng for to be
And demeth yet/whether he do bet/or he
And if thou haddest connynge for tendyte
Yet the shewe matter of to wryte

And with that my handes in two he tooke anone
Of whiche I comforte caught/& went in fast
Ful sobre so I was glad/and wel begon
for ouer al/where I myne eyen caste
Were trees clad with leues/that euer shal laste
Eche in his kynde/with colour fresshe & grene
As emeraude/that I cope it were to sene

The hyder Doe/and ebe the hardy Asshe
The pyler elme/the coffer vnto carayne
The hewe pype tree/before to whyppes lasshe
The saylynge fyr/the cypres deth to playne
The shetere elme/the olyue of pes playne
The Doue eke of newe/and ebe the dronken vyne
The builder okke/the hardy for to dyne

A gardeyne fayre I fond ful of blosmes bo with
Upon a ryuere/in a grene mede
There as swetnesse euermore ynough is
With flowres wh̄ite/blewe/yelowe/and rede
And colde wel stremes/nothynge dede
That swemmen ful of smale fysshes lyght
With fynnes rede/and scales syluer bryght

On euery bough the bryddes herde I synge
With voyce of aungel/in her armony
That dyde her myght the day for to brynge.
The gentil party comyn/to her play gan hy
And further al aboute/I gan aspy
The dredeful Roe/the Buck/the Hert/& Hynde
Squyrels/and bestes smal of gentyl kynde

Of instrumentes/of stringes in accorde
Herde I so playe/a ryght swete melodye
That god/that maker is of al and lorde
Ne herde neuer better/as I gesse
Therwith a wynde/vnneth it myght be lesse
Made in the leues grene/a noyse softe
Accordant to the foules songe on lofte

The ayre of the place/so attempre was (de.
That neuer was there grenance of hote ne cal
There was eke euery holsome spyce & gras
Ne no may may there wayxe sickenesse of
yet was there mete for a thousande folde
More than I can tel/or euer conde or myght
There is euer clere day/and neuer nyght

Vnder a tree/beside a wel I sey
Cupyde our lorde/his arowes forge and fyle
And at his fete/his bowe al redy lay
And wel his doughter tempred al the while
The heedes in the wel/with her wyle
She coucheth hem after/as they shulde serue
Some to slee/& some to wounde and kerue

Tho was I ware of Plesaunce anone right
And of aray/ful fresshe and cleanly
And of the craftes/that can and helpe the myght
To loue beforne/a wyght to done folly
Dysfygured was she/I wyl not lye
And by hym self/vnder an ele I gesse
Saw I Delyt/that stode with gentylnesse

Thus

Thay sawe I beaute/ with a nyce atyre
And youthe/ ful of game and iolyte
Folehardynesse/ flatery/ and despyte
Messagery/mede/and other thre
Her names shal nat here be tolde for me
And vpon pylleres great of Jasper longe
I sawe a temple of Brasse pfounded stronge

And aboute the temple/daunced alway
Women ynowe/of whiche some there were
Some of hem selfe/ a some of hem were gay
In kyrtles al dysheueled went they there
That was theyr offyce euer/fro yere to yere
And on the temple/ sawe I whyte and sayre
Of doowes fleyng/many a thousande payre

And before the temple dore ful soberly
Dame Peace satte/a cuttayne in her honde
And her besyde/ wonder dyscretly
Dame Pacience sittynge there I fonde
With face pale/vpon an hyl of sonde
And alther neyre/within and without
Behesi and Arte/ and of her folke a route

Within the temple/ of syghes hote as fyre
I herde a swough/that gan aboute renne
Whiche syghes were engendred with desyre
That made euery herte for to brenne
Of newe flambe/ and wel espyed I thenne
That al the cause of sorowes/ that they dyde
Come of the bytter goddes ialousye

The god Priapus/ sawe I as I wende
Within the temple/in soueraygne place stande
In suche array/ as whan the asse hym shent
With crye by night/and with scepire in honde
Ful busely men gan assay and fonde
Vpon his herd to sette a fayre sherue
Garlandes/ful of fresshe flowres newe

And in a prety couert/in dysporte
Founde I Venus/ and her porter Rychesse
That was ful noble/ and hauteyn of her porte
Derke was that place/ but after lyghtnesse
I sawe a lyte/ sothely as it myght be lesse
And on a bed of golde/ she lay to rest
Hyr hed that shone semme gay to wrest

Her gylte heeres/ with a golde threde
Ybounde were/ but tressed as she lay
And naked from the brest vnto the hede
Men myght her se/ and fatherly for to say
The remenaunt/ couered wel to my pay
Right with a lytel kerchefe of Valence
There was no thycker cloth of defence

The place gaue a thousande fauoures sote
And Bacchus god of wyne/ sate her besyde
And Ceres next/ that bothe of hunger bote
And as I sayd/ a mydden lay Cupyde
To whom ay suters/ the ponge folkes cryde
To be theyr helpe/ but thus I let her lye
And farther in the temple/ I gan espye

That in dispyte of Diane the chaste
Ful many a bowe ybroke/ hynge on the wal
Of maydens/ suche as goon her tymes waste
In her seruyce/ and paynted ouer al
Of many a flowre/ of whiche I touche shal
A fewe/ as of Calysto and Athalante
And many a mayde/ of which ye name I wote

Semyramus/ Candace/ and Hercules
Hyblis/ Dido/ Tysbe/ and Piramus
Tristran/ Isonde/ Paris/ and Achilles
Helayne/ Cleopatre/ and Troylus
Silla/ and eke the mother of Romulus
Al these were paynted on that other syde
And al her loues/ and in what plyte they dyde

Whan I was comen ayen in to the place
That I of spake/ that was so sote and gent
Forthe walked I tho/ my seluen to solace
Tho was I ware/ where there sate a quene
That as of syght/ the somer sonne shene
Passeth the sterre/ right so ouer mesure
She sayer was than any creature

And in a launde/ vpon an hyl of flowres
Was set this noble goddesse Nature
Of braunches were her halles & her bowres
Iwrought/ after her crafte and her mesure
Ne there nas foule/ that cometh of engendrure
That there ne were pesent/ in her presence
To take her doome/ and yeue her as hyr sentence

For

For this was on sayntˉ Valentynes day
Whan euery foule cometh to chese hys make
Of euery kynde/that men thynke may
And that so huge a noyse gan they make
That erthe/ see/ and tree/ and euery lake
So ful was/that vnneth there was space
For me to stande/ so ful was al the place

And right as Alayne/ in the prayere of Kynde
Deuyseth Nature/of suche array and face
In suche aray /men myght her there fynde
This noble Empresse ful of al grace
Bad euery foule to take her owne place
As they were wont alway/ yere by yere
On sayntˉ Valentynes day/ to stonden there

That is to saye/the foules of raynne
Were hyghest set/and than the foules smale
That eaten/as that nature wolde ordeyne
As worme or thynge/ of whiche I tel no tale
But water foule/that lyue west in the dale
And foules that lyuen by fode/ fate on the grene
And that so many/that wonder was to sene

There might men the royal Egle fynde
That with his sharpe look/perseth the son
And other Egles/ of alo wer kynde
Of whiche that clerkes wel deuysen kan
There was the tyrant with his fethers dun
And grene/ I mene that gosshauke that doth pyne
To byrdes/ for his outrageous rauyne

The gentyl faucon/ that with his fete desyreth
The kynges hande/ the hardy sperhauke eke
The quayles foe/ the merlyon that peyneth
hym selfe ful ofte/the larke for to seke
There was the dome/ with hed couyn meke
The ruddok/ that ofte tyme chaungeth hewe
The tame Ruddocke/and the coward pye

The Cocke/that clokynge is of thoupes lyte
The sparowe Venus son/ and the nyghtyngale
That clepeth forth the freshe leaues newe
The swalowe murdrer of the flyes smale
That maken hony/of floures freshe of hewe
The wedded turtel/ with his herte trewe
The pecocke/ with his aungel fethers bryght
The fesaunt/scorner of the cocke by nyght

The water gose/the cuckowe euer vnkynde
The popyngey/ful of desyrasy
The drake/ stroyer of his owne kynde
The stork/ wreker of auoutry
The hote cormeraunt/ ful of glotony
The rauyn and the crowe/ with her voice of care
The thrustel olde/and the frosty feldefare

What shulde I say/of foules of euery kynde
That in this worlde haue fethers and stature
Than myght in that place assembled fynde
Before that noble goddes of Nature
And eche of them dyd his busy cure
Benygnely to chese/or for to take
By her accorde/his formel or his make

But to the poynt/ Nature held on her honde
A formal Egle/of shape the gentylleste
That euer she amonge her worckes fonde
The most benygne/ and eke the goodlyeste
In her was euery vertue/at his reste
So farforth/that nature herselfe had blysse
To look on her/ and ofte her becke to kysse

Nature/the vycar of the almyghty lorde
That hote/colde/ hevy/lyght/moyst/and dry
Hath knytte/by euen nombre of accorde
In easy voyce/began to speke and say
Foules take hede of my sentence I pray
And for your owne ease/ in fordryng of your nede
As fast as I may speke/I wyl me spede

Ye knowe wel/how on sayntˉ Valentynes day
By my statute/and through my gouernaunce
Ye do chese your makes/and after flye away
With hem/ as I pryke you with plesaunce
But natheles/as by ryghtful ordenaunce
May I not let/for al this worlde to wyte
But he that most worthyest is/shal begyn

The

The tercel Egle/as ye knowe ful wele
The soule royal/aboue you al in degre
The wyse and worthy/the secrete true as stele
The whiche I haue formed/as ye may se
In euery parte/as it best lyketh me
It nedeth nat his shappe you to deuyse
He shal first chese/and speken in his gyse

And after hym/by order shal ye chese
After your kynde/euerych as you lyketh
And as your hap is/shal ye wynne or lese
But whiche of you/that loue most entriketh
God sende hym her/that sorest for hym syketh
And there withal/the Tercel gan she cal
And sayd/my sonne the choyce is to the fal

But natheless/in this condycion
Must be the choyce/of euerych that is here
That she agree to his election
Who so he be/that shulde ben her fere
This is our vsage alway/fro yere to yere
And who so may at this tyme haue his grace
In blyssful tyme he came in to this place

With heed enclyned/& with ful humble chere
This royal Tercel spake/and taryed nought
Vnto my souerayne lady/and nat my fere
I chose & chese/with wyl/herte/and thought
The formel on your hande/so wel y wrought
Whose I am al/and euer wyl her serue
Do what her lust/to do me lyue or sterue

Besechynge her of mercy/and of grace
As she that is my lady soueravne
Or let me dye/here present in this place
For certes/longe may I nat lyue in payne
For in my herte is couen euery vayne
Hauynge regarde onely to my trouthe
Wyth dere herte/haue on my wo some routhe

And if I be founde to her vntrewe
Dysobeysaunt/or wylful neglygent
A vauntour/or in processe loue a newe
I pray to you this be my iugement
That with these soules I be al to rent
That ylke day/that she me euer fynde
To her vntrue/or in my gylte vnkynde

And syth that none loueth her so wel as I
Although she neuer of loue me behet
Than ought she be myne/through her mercy
For other bonde/can I none on her knet
For wele nor wo/neuer shal I let
To serue her/howe farre so that she wende
Say what you lyst/my tale is at an ende.

Right as the freshe reed Rose newe
Agaynst the sonne sonne coloured is
Right so for shame/al wexen gan she hewe
Of this formel/whan she herde al this
Neyther she answerde wel/ne sayd amys
So sore abasshed was she/tyl that Nature
Sayd/doughter drede you nat/I you assure

Another tercel Egle spake anone
Of lower kynde/and sayd that shulde nat be
I loue her better than ye do/by saynt John
Or at lerst/I loue her as wel as ye
And lenger haue serued her in my degre
And if she shulde haue loued for long louyng
To me alone had be the guerdonyng

I dare ese say/if she me fynde false
Unkynde/iaungler/or rebel in any wyse
Or ielous/do me hange by the halse
And but I beare me in her seruyse
As wel as my wyt can me suffyse
Fro poynt to poynt/her honour for to saue
Take she my lyfe/and al the good I haue

The thyrde tercel Egle/answerde tho
Nowe syrs/ye se the lyerd stryken here
For euery foule cryeth out to be ago
Forth with his make/or with his lady dere
And ese Nature her selfe/me wyl not here
For tarying her/nat halfe that I wolde sey
And but I spede/I must for sorowe dey

Of longe seruyce/auaunt I me no thynge
But as possyble is me to dye to day
For wo/as he that hath be languysshynge
Thus twenty wynter/and wel at hap he may
A man may serue better/and waxe to pay
In halfe a yere/al though it were no more
Than some man doth/that hath served ful yore

I se

I nat say nat this by me/ for I me cay
Do no scrupee/ that may my lady please
But I dare say/ I any her trewest many
As to my wome/ and sayneste wolde her please
If sporte wordes/ tyll that bethe me cease
I wyll be here/ whether I wake or wynke
And trewe/ in al that herte may bethynke

Of al my lyfe/ syth that day I was borne
So gentyl plee/ in loue or other thynge
Ne herde neuer no many me beseme
Who that had leyser and conuenyent
For to reherse theyr chere/ & theyr spekynge
And from the morowe we gan thes sperhe fast
Ay do wnwarde went the foy wonder fast

The noyse of fowles for to be delyuerde
So loude range/ haue done and let be wende
That wel wende I/ the wod had al to shyuerd
Some of they cryed/ alas ye wyl be shende
Whan that your cursed pleedyng haue an ende
So we shulde a nuge/ eyther partyes sene
Ine or nay/ without any mene

The gose/ the ducke/ and the cuckow eke also
So ryed brle brle/ cuckow we/ quake quake hy
That thrughe myne eares/ the noyse went tho
The gose sayd than/ al this nye wonth a stye
But I can shape herof a remedy
And wyl say my verdyte/ sayne and swythe
For water fowle/ who so be wroth or blythe

And I for worn fowle/ sayd the fole cuckow we
For I wyl of myne owne auctorite
For cloos of bode/ take on me the charge no me
For to delyuer be/ it is great charyte
I may mysse a whyle/ yet perde
(Quod the Turtel) of it be your wyl
I wyste may spelle/ it were as good be styl,

I my a sede fowle/ one the fayrest wyth
That wonn I wel/ and fresh of remynge
But better is/ that a wyghtes tonge rest
Than entremete hym of suche doynge
Of whiche he wyteles rede can nat synge
And who fond doth/ ful fowle hym selfe acloyeth
For ofte vnchaunted/ ofte anoyeth

Nature/ whiche that alway had an eare
To murmure of the lewdnesse beforne
Bad forwarde Boyce sayd/ hold your tonge there
And I shal soone/ I hope a counsayle synde
You for to delyuer/ & fro this noyse vnbynde
I charge/ of every fleshe ye shal one cal
To say the verdyte of you fowles al

Assented were/ to this conclusyon
The byrdes al/ and fowles of raupne
Haue chosen fyrst/ by playne electyon
The Tercelet of the faucon to dyssyne
Al her sentence/ and as hym lust to termyne
And to Nature/ hym they dyd present
And she accepteth hym with glad entent

The tercelet sayd than/ in this maners
Ful herde it were/ to preue it by reason
Who soueth best/ this gentyl formel here
For euerych hath suche replycatyon
That by sylles may none be brought adowne
I can nat se/ that argumentes auayle
Than seweth it/ there must be batayle

Al redy quod these Egles tarcelles tho
Nay syre (quod he) if that I durst it say
ye do me wronge/ my tale is nat ydo
For syre/ taketh nat agryse I pray
It may nat be as ye wolde/ in this way
Ours is the voyce/ that haue the charge in hande
And to the Juges dome/ ye must stande

And therfore peace I saye/ as to my wyt
We wolde the rule/ how we that the worthyest
Of kynghthode/ and lengest had vsed it
Moost of estate/ of blode the gentylleste
Were sette vnge for her/ if that her lest
And of these thre/ she wote her selfe I trowe
Whiche that he be/ for it is lyght to knowe

The water fowles/ haue their herdes layde
Togyder/ and of shorte auysement
Whan euerych had his verdyte sayde
They sayd sothely/ al by one assent
How we that the goos/ with the facounde gent
That so desyreth/ to pronounce our nede
Shal tel our tale/ and prayed to god her spede

And

And for these water foules/ tho began
The goose to spede/ and in her cakelynge
She said/ peace nowe/ take kepe every man
And herken which a reson I shal forth bryng
Wy wytte is sharpe/ I loue no taryenge
I say I rede hym/ tho he were my brother
But she wyl loue hym/ let hym loue another

Lo here a parfyte reason of a gose
(Quod the sperhauke) neuer mote she the
Lo/ suche a thynge it is to haue a tonge lose
Nowe parde foole/ yet were it better for the
Haue holde thy peace/ than shewde thy nyerte
It seeth nat in his wyt/ nor in his wyl
But sothe is sayd/ a fole can nat be styl

The laughter arose/ of gentyl foules al
And ryght anone/ the fede foules chosen hab
The turtel trewe/ and gan her to hem cal
And prayed her to say/ the sothe sad
Of this mater/ and asked what she rad
And she answered/ that playnly her entent
She wolde shewe/ and fotherly what she ment

Nay/ god forbede a louer shulde chaunge
The turtel sayd/ & wexte for shame al reed
Thoughe that his lady/ euermore be straunge
yet let hym serue her alway/ tyl he be deed
For sothe/ I prayse nat the goses reed
For tho she oped/ I wolde non other make
I wyl be hers/ tyl that the dethe me take

Wel ybourded (qõ the duke) by my hat
That men shulde loue alway causeles
Who can a reason fynde/ or wyt in that
Daunceth he merry/ that is myrthles
Who shulde rede/ of that is rechelesse
Yet queue yet (qõ the duke) ful wel and sayre
There be mo sterres in the sky than a payre

Nowe fye churle (qõ the gentyl Tercelet)
Out of the donghyl/ came that worde aryght
Thou canst not se/ whiche thynge is wel beset
Thou fleest by lone/ as owles do by lyght
The day he blyndeth/ ful wel they se by nyght
Thy kynde is of so lowe wretchednesse
That what loue is/ thou canst nat se nor gesse

Tho gan the cuckowe put hym forth in preace
For foule that eateth wormes/ and sayd thus
So I (qõ he) may haue my make in peace
I retche nought/ how longe that ye stryue
Let hem of hem be holeyn al her lyue
This is my rede/ sens they maye nat accorde
This shorte lessoy/ nedeth not recorde

Ye/ haue the glutton fylde his paunche
Than are we wel/ sayd the Emerlon
Thou murderer of hy heysugge/ on the blanche
That brought the forthe/ thou cursed glutton
I put thou soleyn/ wormes corruption
For no force is/ of lacke of thy nature
Go lewde be thou/ whyle the worlde may dure

Nowe peace (qõ Nature) I cõmaunde hem
For I haue herde al your opinyon
And in effecte/ pat be we neuer the nere
But fynally/ this is my conclusyon
That she her selfe shal haue her election
Of whom her lyst/ who so be wrothe or blythe
Hym hy she chese th/ he shal her haue as swythe

For sythe it may not here discussed be
Who loueth her beste/ as sayd the Tercelet
Than wol I done this fauour to her/ hy she
Shal haue right hym/ on whom her hert is set
And he her/ that his herte hath on her knit
This rage I Nature/ for I may not lye
To none estate/ I haue none other eye

But as for counsayle/ for to chose a make
If I were reason/ than wolde I
Counsayle you/ the royal tercel take
As sayd the tercelet/ ful shyrefully
As for the gentilest/ and moste worthy
Which I haue wrought so wel to my plesaunce
That to you it ought ben a full pleasaunce

With dredeful ioyce/ the formel her answerde
Wy right ful lady/ goddesse of Nature
Sothe is/ that I am euer vnder your yerde
As is euerych other creature
And muste be yours/ whyle my lyfe may dure
And therfore graunt me my first boone
And myn entent/ you wel I say right soone

I graunt

I graunt it you (quod she) and right anone
This foweel Egle spake in this degre
Almyghty quene/ vnto this yere we bone
Ase resyde for to auysen me
And after that to haue my choyce al fre
Thus al and some/that I wolde spede and spy
Ye gat no more/al though ye do me dey

I wol not greuen Venus/ ne Cupyde
For sothe do pet/by no maner way
Nowe sens it may none other wayes betyde
(Quod Nature) here is no more to say
Than wolde I that these fowles were away
Eche with his make/for taryeng lenger here
And sayd hem thus/as ye shal after here

To you spake I/ye terrestre (q̄ Nature)
Bethe of good herte/and serueth al thre
A yere is not so longe to endure
And eche of you payne him in his degree
For to do wel/for god wote quyte is she
For you this yere/what after so befal
This entremes/ is dressed fro you al

And whā this werke brought was to an ende
To euery fowle/ Nature gaue his make
By euen accorde/and on her way they wende
And forde the ryuere and top that they make
For eche of hem gan other in his wynges take
And with her neebes/eche gan other wynde
Thāk̄yng alway/the noble goddesse of kynde

But first were chosen fowles for to synge
As yere by yere/was alway her vsaunce
To synge a roundel at her departyng
To do Nature honour and plesaunce
The note I trowe/maked was in Fraunce
The wordes were such/ as ye may here fynde
The next vere/as I nowe haue in mynde

Qui bien ayme tarde oublie.

Nowe welcome somer/ with thy sonnes softe
That hast this wynter wethers ouerthrowe
Saynt Valentyne/thou art ful hye on lofte
Which dryuest away/the longe nyghtes slowe
Thus syngen smale fowles for thy sake
Wel haue they cause for to gladen ofte
Sens eche of hem recouered hath his make
Ful blissful may they synge whan they awake.

And wt the shoutyng whā her songe was do
That fowles made/at her flyght away
I woke/and other bokes toke me to
To rede vpon/and yet I rede alway
I hope alwys to rede so some day
That I shal mete some thyng for to fare
The bet/and thus to rede I nyl not spare.

Explicit.

The Floure of Curtesy.

IN Fenerier/whan the frosty moone
Was horned/ful of Phebus fury fyght
And that she gan to crepse her stremes sone
Saynt Valentyne/vpon thy blissful nyght
Of dutie/whan glad is euery wight
And fowles chese/ to bowde her olde sorowe
Euerych his make/vpon the next morowe

The same tyme I herde a larke synge
Ful lustely/agayne the morowe gray
Awake ye louers/out of your slombrynge
This glad morowe/in al the haste ye may
Some obseruaunce dothe vnto this day
Your choyse ayen of herte to renewe
In constancyng/ for euer to be trewe

And ye that be of chosyng at your large
This lusty day/by custome of nature
Take vpon you the blissful holy charge
To serue loue/whyle your lyse may dure
With herte/body/and al your besy cure
For euermore/as Venus and Cupide
For you disposeth/and the god Cupyde

For iope owe we playnly to obey
Vnto this lordes mighty ordynaunce
And mercyplesse rather for to dye
Than euer in you be founden varyaunce
And though your lyse be medled wt grenaūce
And at your herte closet be your wounde
Beth alway one/there as ye are bounde

That whan I had herde and lysted longe
With deuoute herte/the lusty melodye
Of this heuenly comfortable songe
So agreable/ as by ermonye
I rose anon/and faste gan me hye
Towarde a grene/and the way take
Foules to sene/euerych chose his make

And yet I was ful thursty in languisshyng
Myn ague was so feruent in his hete
Whan Aurora/for drery complaynyng
Lay distyl her chrystal teeres wete
Upon the soyle/with syluer dewe so swete
For she durste for shame not apere
Under the lyght of Phebus beames clere

And so for angupssshe of my paynes kene
And for constraynte of my sighes sore
I set me down/vnder a laurer grene
Ful pitously/and alway more and more
As I beheelde in to the holtes hore
I gan complayne myn inwarde deedly smerte
That ayr so sore crampesssh at myn herte

And whyle that I in my drery payne
Sate/and beheelde aboute on euery tre
The foules sytte/alway twayne & twayne
Than thought I thus/alas what may this be
That euery foule hath his lyberte
Freely to chose/after his desyre
Euerych his make/thus fro yere to yere

The selly wrenne/the tytemose also
The lytel redbrest/ haue free election
To flyen yfere/and togyther go
Where as hem lyst/aboute enuyron
As they of kynde haue inclynacion
And as Nature/empresse and gyde
Of euery thyng lyst to prouyde

But may alone/alas the harde stounde
Ful cruelly/by kyndes ordynaunce
Constrayned is/and by statute bounde
And debarred from al suche plesaunce
What meneth this/ what is this purueyaunce
Of god aboue/ageyne al right of kynde
Without cause/so narow we may to kynde

Thus may I sery and playne/ alas
My woful houre/and my desauenture
That doulfully stonde in the same cass
So ferre behynde/from al helth and cure
My wounde abydeth lyke a surfaunce
For me fortune so felly lyste dispose
My harme is hyd/that I dare not disclose

For I my herte haue set/ in suche a place
Where I ay neuer lykely for to spede
So ferre I am hyndred from her grace
That saue dawnger/ I haue none other mede
And thus alas/ I not who shal me rede
Ne for myne helpe shape remedye
For Wale bouche/and for false cumpe

The whiche twayne/ aye stondeth in my wey
Wayteyng/and false suspection
Is very cause also that I dey
Spurnyng and rote of my distruction
So that I fele/ in conclusyon
With her trapnes/that they wol me shende
Of my labour/ that dethe mote make an ende

yet or I dye/with herte/wyl/ and thought
To god of loue/ this amende I make
As I best can/ howe dere that it be bought
Where so it be/that I slepe or wake
Whyle Boreas dothe the leaues shake
As I haue heyght/playnly tyl I serue
For wel or wo/that I shal her serue

And for her sake/now this holy tyme
Saynt Valentyne/somwhat shal I write
Al though so be/that I can not ryme
Nor curyously by no crafte endyte
Yet fewer I haue/ that she put the wyte
In vncouenyng/than in negligence
What euer I saye/ of her excellence

What euer I say/it is of dute
In sothfastnesse/and no presumpcion
This I ensure to you that shal it se
That it is al vnder correccion
What I reherse in cõmendacion
Of her/ that I shal to you as kyue
So as I can/her vertues here discryue.

Right

Lyght by exaumple/as the sonne sonne
Passeth the sterre/with his bemmes shene
And Lucyfer/amonge the sterres donne
Amore we shewith/in bodye wyghtes tene
So verily/withouten any wene
My lady passeth/who so taketh hede
Al tho alyue/to spede of womanhede

And as the Ruby hath the sourrayne
Of ryche stones/and the regalye
And the rose of swetnesse and beaute
Of flurs/the flourre/without any fye
Right so in sothe/with her goodly eye
She passeth al/in bountie and fayrenesse
Of maner ese/and of gentylnesse

For she is bothe the fayrest and the beste
To reken al/in very sothfastnesse
For euery Vertue is in her at reste
And furthermore/to spede of stedfastnesse
She is the rote/and of stedfastnesse
The very myrrour/and of gouernaunce
To al exaumple/withouten varyaunce

Of porte bemygne/and wonder glad of chere
Hauyng euermore her trewe aduertence
Alway to reason/so that her despit
Is budded aye/by wytte and prompdence
There to of wytte/and of hye prudence
She is the welle/aye demoyde of pride
That vnto Vertue/her semeth is the gyde

And ouer this/in her behaunce
Lowly she is/discrete and wyse
And goodly gladde/by attemperaunce
That euery wight/of hygh and lowe degre
Art glad in herte/with her for to be
So that shortly/if I shal not lye
She nameth is/the Flowre of Curtesye

And there to spede of femynyte
The leste mannyssh in comparyson
Goodly abasshed/hauyng aye pyte
Of hem that ben in tryboulacion
For she alone is consolacion
To al that ben in mischefe and in nede
To rumfort hem/of her mannyshede

And aye in Vertue is her besy charge
Sadde and demure/and but of wordes fewe
Dredeful also of tonges that ben large
Eschewyng aye hem/that lysten to shewe
Aboue her hede/her wordes for to shewe
Dishonestly to spede of any wight
She deedly hateth/of hem to haue a syght

The herte of whom/so honest is and clene
And her entent/so faythful and entere
That she ne may/for al the worlde susteine
To suffre her eeres any worde to here
Of slonde nor for/neyther ferre ne nere
Amysse reso wnig/ þ hynder shulde his name
And if she do/she weyth reed for shame

So tenderly in menyng she is in fette
Without chaungyng/or any doublenesse
For bountie and beautie/are togyther knette
In her persone/vnder sayth fulnesse
For bothe she is of newfangelnesse
In herte aye one/for euer to persewe
There she is sette/and neuer to dissewe

I am to rude/her Vertues euerychone
Lowrynglp to discryue and write
For wel ye wote/colour haue I none
Lyke her discretion/ crastely to endyte
For what I say/al it is to lyte
Wherfore to you/thus I me excuse
That I aqueynted am not with no muse

By reason/my style to gouerne
In her praise and comendacion
I am to blynde/ so hyghe to discerne
Of her goodnesse/to make description
Sauc thus I say in conclusyon
If that I shal shortly comende
In her is naught/that nature can amende

For good she is/lyke to Polycrene
And in fayrenesse/to the quene Helayne
Stedfast of herte/as was Penelope
And wyfely trouthe/if I shal not fayne
In constaunce eke/ feythe/she may attayne
To Cleopatre/and therto as strong
As was of Troye/the whyte Antygone

As Hester mese/ lyke Judith of prudence
Lyke as Alcest/ or Marcia Catoun
And to Grisylde lyke in patience
And Ariadne of discrecioun
And to Lucrece/ that was of Rome toun
She may be lykened as for honestie
And for her faythe/ vnto Penelope

To sayre Phyllis/ and to Hipsyphile
For innocence/ and for womanhede
For stedfastnesse vnto Canace
And ouer this/ to speke of goodlyhede
She passeth al that I can of rede
For worde and dede/ that she naught ne sal
Accorde in vertue/ and her werkes al

For though that Dydo with wytte sage
Was in her tyme stedfast to Ence
Of hastynesse yet she dyd outrage
And so for Jason dyd also Medee
But my lady is so auysee
That bountie & beautie/ bothe in her demeyne
She maketh bountie alway soueraygne

This is to meane/ bountie gothe afore
Lad by prudence/ and hath the soueraynte
And beautie folowith/ ruled by her lore
That she ne sende her in no degre
So that in one/ this goodly stresse fre
Surmountyng al/ withouten any were
Is good and sayre/ in one persone pfere

And though that I for very ignorance
Ne may discryue her vertues vp and by
Yet on this day for a remembrance
Onely supported vnder her mercy
With quakyng honde/ I shal ful humbly
To her hynesse/ my rudenesse for to quyte
A lytel balade/ here vnder endyte

Euer as I can suppryse in myn herte
Alway with feare/ betwyxt drede and shame
Lest out of lose/ any worde asterte
In this metre/ to make it seme lame
Chaucer is dead/ that had suche a name
Of sayre makyng/ that without were
Fayrest in our tonge/ as the Laurer grene

We may assay for to counterfete
His gay style/ but it wyl not be
The welle is dry/ with the lycoure swete
Bothe of Clye/ and of Calliope
And first of al/ I wol excuse me
To her that is grounde of goodlyhede
And thus I say/ vnto her womanhede.

¶ Balade lytyle.

¶ With al my might/ and my best entent
With al the sayth that mighty god of hynde
Me pave/ sith he me soule and bodi wyng sent
I chese/ and to this bonde euer I me bynde
To loue you best/ whyle I haue lyse & mynde
Thus herde I soules in the daunsynge
Vpon the day of sayne Valentyne syngē

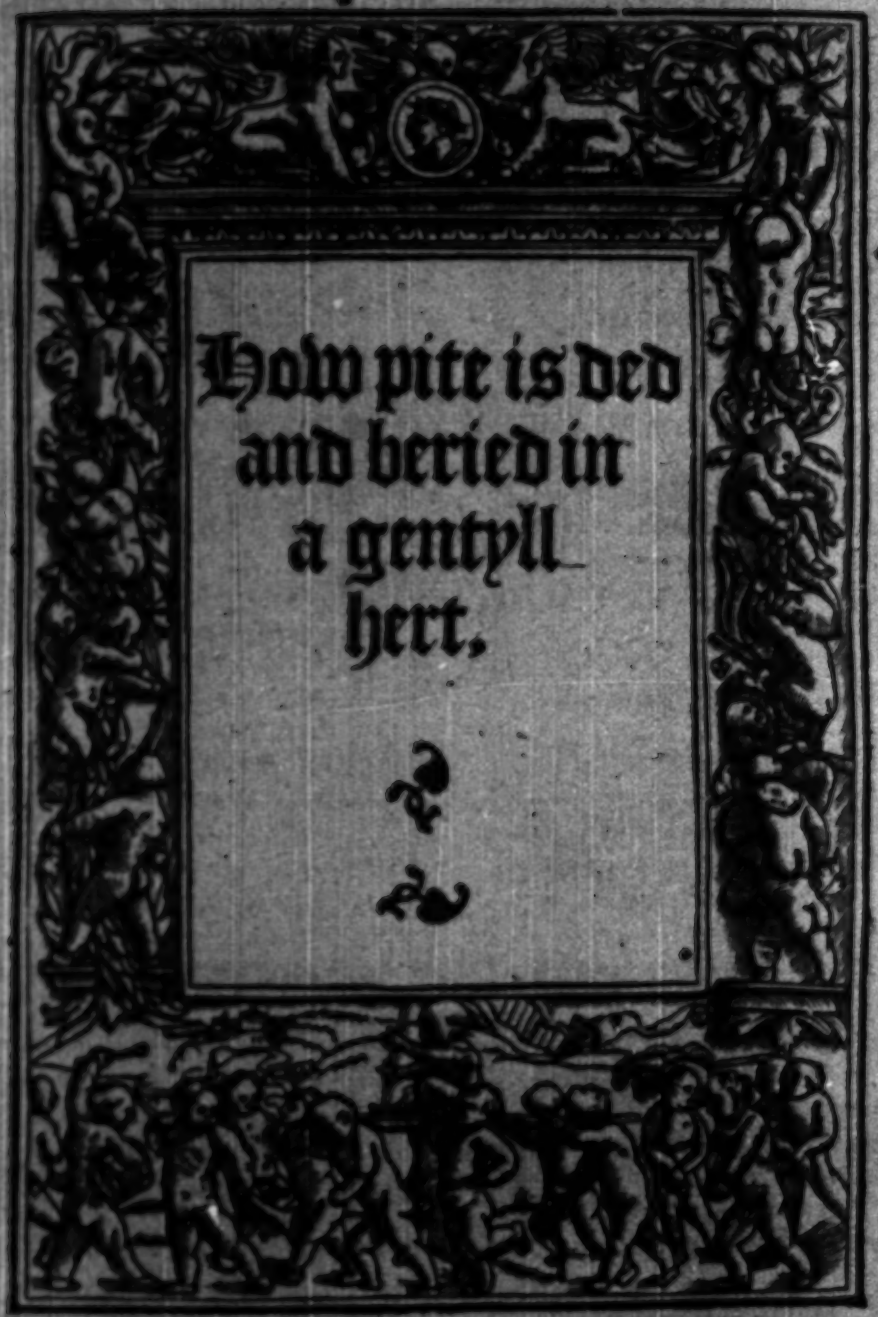
yet chese I at the begynnyng/ in this entent
To loue you/ though I no mercy synde
And if you syste I oyed/ I wolde assent
As euer I wynne I quyte out of thus lynde
Suffyseth me to serue your sethers pynde
Thus herde I soules in the morynge
Vpon the daye of sayne Valentyne syngē

And ouer this/ myne herties suste to bende
In honour onely of the wodde hynde
Holy I serue/ neuer to repende
In ioye or wo/ where so that I wynde
To sore Cupide/ with his eyen blynde
The soules al/ whan I pray dyd synge
With deuoute hert/ me thought I herde syngē.

¶ Lenuoye.

¶ Princesse of beautie/ to you I represent
This symple dyte/ rude as in makynge
Of herte and wyl/ saythful in myn entent
Lyke as this day/ soules herde I syngē.

¶ Here endeth the flowre of Curtesy/
and here after folowith/ howe
ppre is dead and buryed
in a gentle herte.


How pite is ded
and beried in
a gentyll
hert.

PYte that I haue sought so yore ago
With herte sore/and sul of busy payne
That in this worlde was neuer wight so wo
Without nede/and if I shal not fayne
My purpose was/ pyte to complayne
Vpon the cruelte and tyrannye
Of loue/that for my trouthe dothe me dye

And that I by length of certayne yeres
Had euer in mine/sought a tyme to speke
To Pyte my L/al by spreput with teres
To prayen her on Cruelte me awreke
Put of I myght with any worde out breke
Or tel her any of my payues smarte
I sounde her dead/and buryed in ay herte

Howe I fel/whan I sawe the herse
Dead as a stone/whyle ꝑ the swounde me laste
Vnt vp I rose/with colour ful dyuerse
And pytously on her myn eyen I caste
And neuer the coste I gan pitously faste
And for the soule/I hope me sol to pray
I was but lowne/there was no more to say

Thus any I slayne/sythe that Pyte is dead
Alas that day that euer it shulde fal
What maner man dare nowe holde vp his hed
To whom shal nowe any sorouful herte cal
Sithe Cruelte hath caste to slee vs al
In vdle hope/fothe redelesse of payne
Sythe she is dead/ to whom shal we complayne

But yet encreaseth me this wonder newe
That no wight wote that she so dead but I
So many men as in her tyme her knewe
And yet she deyde so sodainly
For I haue sought her euer ful besily
Sythe I had furst wytte et engyne
Ful she was dead er I coude her fynde

Vnder her herse there sloden lustely
Without ony mo/as thought me
Beaute/ perfytly wel armed and richely
And fresshe Beaute/Lust/ and Jolyte
Assured maner/youthe/and Honeste
Wysdome/Estate/Drede/ and Gouernaunce
Lowlyhed stode vp hande and alyaunce

A complaynte had I written in my honde
To haue put to Pyte/as a byl
But I there al thes company fonde
That rather wolde al my cause spyl
Than do me helpe/I helde my playnte styl
For to those folke withouten fayle
Without pyte/there may no byl auayle

Than leaue al Vertues/saue onely pyte
Kepyng the corse/as ye haue herde me sayne
Confouned by bonde vnto Cruelte
And be assented whan I shal be slayne
And I haue put my complaynte vp agayne
For to my foes/ my byl I dare not shewe
The effecte/whiche sayth thus in wordes fewe

O Humblest of herte/hyest of reuerence
Benigne flour/crowne of vertues al
Sheweth vnto your royal excellence
Your seruaunt/ if I durst me so cal
His mortal harme/in whiche he is pfal
And nought al onely for his wofu fare
But for your renome/as he shal declare

It standeth thus / that your cõtrary cruelte
Alyed is ayenst your regalye
Vnder colour of womanly beaute
For men shulde not knowe her tyrannye
With Bountie/ Gentylesse/ and Curtesy
And hath depriued you of your place
That is high beaute/ apertenant to yo' grace

For Eyndesy/ by your herytage right
Ye be annexed euer vnto bounte
And verily ye ought do your myght
To helpe trouthe in his aduersyte
Ye be also the corowne of beaute
And certes if ye wante in these twayne
The worlde is lore/there is no more to sayne

Se what anayeth maner and gentylesse
Without you/benigne creature
Shal cruelte be your gouernouresse
Alas/ what herte may it longe endure
Wherfore but ye rather take cure
To bieke that perylous aspaunce
Ye seely hem that ben in your obeysaunce

And

And further/if ye suffre thus
pour renome is fordo in a thowe
Therr shal no man wete what pyte is
Alas/that euer pour renome is fal so lowe
ye be also fro pour herytage ythrowe
By cruelte/that occupyeth pour place
And we despayred/that seken pour grace

Haue mercy on me/ thou Herennus quene
That pou haue sought/ so tenderly and sore
Let some streme of lyght on me be sene
That loue and drede pou euer lenger the more
For sothly to sayne/ I beare so sore
And though I be not conning for to playne
For goddes loue haue mercy on my payne

My payne is this/that what so I despyte
That haue I not/ne nothyng lyke therto
And euer setteth despyte myn herte on fyre
Lke on that other syde where that I go
What maner thyng that may encrease my wo
That haue I redy vnsought euery where
Me lacketh but my dethe/ and than my bere

What nedeth to shewe perced of my payne
Sythe euery wo/that herte may bethynke
I suffre/and yet I dare not to pou playne
For wel I wote/though I wake or wynke
ye recke not whether I flete or synke
And natheleste yet my trouthe I shal sustene
Vnto my dethe/and that shal wel be sene

This is to sayne/ I wyl be youre euer
Though ye me slee by cruelte pour so
Algate my spyrite shal neuer discreuer
Fro pour seruyce/ for any payne or wo
Sythe ye be yet deed/ alas that it is so
Thus for pour dethe/ I may wepe & playne
With herte sore/ and ful of bely payne.

Explicit.

La belle dame sans mercy.

Alse in a dreme/ not fully wel awaked
The golde slepe me wrapped vnder his
yet nat for thy I rose/ a wel nigh naked (wise
Al sodenly my selfe remembryng
Of a mater/ seruyng al other thynge
Whiche I must do withoutyn more delay
For hem/ whiche I durst nat disobey

My charge was this/ to translate by and by
Al thynge forgyue/ an parte of my penaunce
A boke/ called La bel dame sauns mercy
Whiche mayster Alcyne made of remembraūce
There secretaryes with the kyng of Fraunce
And herupon a whyle I stode musyng
And in my selfe greatly pensyfe ynge

What kynde I shulde persoune ye sayd processe
Conspderyng by good aduysement
My vnconnyngne/ and my great symplenesse
And ayenwarde the strayte cōmaundement
Whiche that I had/ and thus in myne entent
I was beset and tourned vp and dowr
And yet at last/ as in conclusyon

I cast my clothes on/ and went my wey
This forsayd charge hauyng in remembraūce
Tyl I came to a lusty grene valey
Ful of flowres/ to se a great plesaunce
And so boldly with theyr benygne suffraunce
Whiche rede this boke/ touchynge this matere
Thus I began/ if it please pou to here.

Al longe ago/ rydynge an esy pace
I fel in thought of my ful desperate
With great dyseaste a payne/ so that I was
Of al sowres the most vnfortunate
Syth by hir darte/ most cruel ful of hate
The dethe hath take my body and my spirite
And left me sole/ thus dysconfyte & mate
Sore languyssyng/ and in way of dystresse

Than sayd I thus/ it falleth me to crye
Eyther to tyme/ or elles for to make
And I surely to make a ful promesse
To laugh no more/ but wepe in clothes blake
My ioyful tyme (alas) nowe doth it slake
For in my sight I se no sygne of ease

Let it be inpiery/ suche fortune (as I take)
Whiche neyther me/ nor non other doth please

If it were so/my wyl or myne entent
Constrayned were/a ioyful thynge to wryte
My penne coude neuer shewe/ what it ment
To speke therof/my tonge hath no delyte
Tho with my mouthe I laugh/ morthe or lyte
Myne eyen shulde make a countenaunce contrary
My herte also/ wolde haue therof dyspyte
The wrynge teares/haue so large yssue

Thes sixe seuere I leue/that to hem longes
Whiche lede their lyfe in hope of alegeaunce
That is to say/to make balades and songes
Euery of hem/as they fele their grenaunce
For: she that was my ioy/and my plesaunce
Whose soule I pray god/ of his mercy saue
She hath my wyl/myne hertes ordynaunce
Whiche lyeth here/Within this tombe ygrave

Fro this tyme forth/tyme is to holde my pees
It werycth me/thes mater for: to trete
Let other louers put hem selfe in prees
Their: season is/my tyme is me forgete
Fortune by strength/the victory hath obtayned
Wherin was sperde al my worldly richesse
And al the goodes/whiche that I haue gete
In my best tyme of youthe/and lustynesse

Loue hath me kepte vnder his gouernaunce
I myspoke/god graunt me forgyuenesse
If I dyd wel/yet felte I no plesaunce
I caused neyther ioye nor heuynesse
For: when she dyed/that was my maystres
By wel or ylle/that made the same purchase
The dethe hath sperde my bondes of wyfnes
Thus for nothyng myn herte shal neuer pese

In this great thought/sore troubled in myndes
Alone thus rode I/al the mery wey tydes
Tyl at the last it happed me to fynde
The place/wherin I cast me to abyde
Whan that I had no further for: to ryde
And as I wente/my lodgynge to purueye
Right soone I herde a lytel me besyde
In a gardeyn/where many folke gan to playe

With that anone/I went me backer more
By selfe and I/me thought we were ynowe
But twayne that were my frendes here before
Had me espyed/and yet I wote nat howe
They came for: me/a wayarde I me drowe
Som what by force/som what by her requeste
That ny no wyse/I coude my selfe resolue
But nedes I must come ny and se the feste

At my comynge/the ladyes euerychone
Bad me welcome/god wote right gentylly
And made me chere/euery one by one
A great dele better than I was worthy
And of their grace/shewed me grete curtesy
Wt good disport/bicause I shuld nat mourne
That day I bode styl in their company
Whiche was to me/a gracyous soiourne

The bordes were spred/in right lytel space
The ladyes sat/ryche as hem semed best
There were no derely seruauntes in the place
But chosen men/right of the goodlyest
And some there were/pauēture most fressheste
That sawe they: iuges sul demure
Without semblaunt/eyther to most or lest
Nat withstandynge/they had hem vnder cure

Amonge al other/one I gan espy
Whiche in grete thought/sul oftē came a went
As one that had ben rauysshed bitterly
In his languige/nat greatly dyspygnt
His countenaunce he kept wt great tourment
But for despyte sarre passed his reason
For: euer his eye/went after his entent
Ful many a tyme/when it was no season

To make chere/sore him selfe he payned
And outwardly he fayned great gladnesse
To synge also/byforce he was constrayned
For: no plesaunce/but very shamfastnesse
For: the complaynte of his moste heynesse
Came to his voyce/alway without request
Lyke as the swane of Bridee dothe cyprisse
When they synge loude/in frythe or in forest

Other there were/that serued in the hal
But none lyke hym/ as after myn aduyse
For: he was pale/and somwhat leane withal

His

His speche also trymbled in fereful wyse
And euer alone/but whan he dyd seruyse
Al blacke he warr/ & no deuyse but playne
We thought by hym/as my wyt coude suffyse
His herte was nothyng in his owne demeyne

To feest hem al/he dyd his dylygence
And wel he coude/ryght as it semed me
But euermore/whan he was in presence
His chere was done/it wolde none other be
His scholemayster had suche authoute
That al the whyle he bode styl in the place
Speke coude he nat/but vpon her beaute
He loked styl/ with right a pytous face

With that his herd he tourned at the last
For to beholde the ladyes euerychone
But euer in one/he set his eye stedfast
On her/whiche his thought was most vpon
For of his eyen/the shot I knewe anone
Whiche fereful was/ w^t right hũble requestes
Than to my selfe I sayd/by god alone
Suche one was I/for that I sawe these festes

Out of the prese he wente ful easely
To make stable his hevy countenaunce
And wote ye wel/he syghed wonderly
For his sore wes and wofal remembraunce
Than in hym selfe/he made his ordynaunce
And forth withal came to bringe in the messe
But for to iuge/his most woful penaunce
God wote it was a pytous entremesse

After dyner anone/they hem auaunced
To daunce aboue the folkes euerychone
And forth withal/this hevy man he daunced
Somtyme with twayne/& somtyme with one
Vnto hem al/his chere was after one
No we here no we there/ as fel by aventure
But euer amonge/he drewe to her alone
Whiche he most dred/of lyuynge creature

To myne aduyse/good was his purueyãce
Whan he her chase/ to his maystres alone
If that her herte were set to his plesaunce
As moche as was her beauteous persone
For who so euer setteth his trust vpon
The reporte of the eyen/withouten more
He myght be dred/and grauen vnder stone
Or euer he shulde/his hertes ease restore

In her sayled nothyng/that I coude gesse
One wyse nor other/pleny nor perte
A garyson she was/of al goodlynesse
To make a sraunger/for a louers herte
Right yonge & fresshe/a woman ful couerte
Assured wele of porte/and eke of chere
Wele at her ease/withouten wo or swerte
Al vnderneth the standerde of daungere

To se the feest/it werped me ful sore
For hevy ioye doth sore the herte trauayle
Out of the prese/I me withdrewe therfore
And set me do wne alone behynde a trayle
Ful of leues/to se a great mernayle
With grene knottes pbounden wonderly
The leues were so thycke withouten fayle
That thrughout/ no man myght me espy

To this lady he came ful curteisly
whã he thought tyme to daũce w^t her a trace
Set in an herber/made ful plesauntly
They rested hem fro thens but a lytel space
Nygh hem were none/of a certayne compace
But onely they/as farre as I coude se
Vnto the trayle/there I had chose my place
There was no more bytwene hem two & me

I harde the louer syghyng wonder sore
For ape the more/the sore it hym sought
His inwarde payne he coude not kepe in sure
Nor for to speke/so hardy was he nought
His leche was nere/ & gretter was his thought
He mused sore/to conquere his desyre
For no man may to more penaũce be brought
Than in his herte/to bring hym to the fyre

The herte began to swel within his chest
So sore strayned/ for anguisshe & for payne
That al to perce almoste it to brest
Whan bothe at ones/ so sore it dyd constrayne
Desyre was bolde/but shame it gan restrayne
That one was large/the other was ful chest
No lytel charge was layde on hym certayne
To kepe suche werre/and haue so many foes

Ful

ful ofte tymes to speke/ thus self he payned
But shame a shrewe a drede/ sayd euer nay
yet at the last/ so sore he was constrayned
Whan he ful longe had put it in delay
To his lady/ right thus than gan he say
With dredeful voyce/ wepyng/ halfe in a rage
for me was purueyed/ an vnhappy day
Whan I first had a sight of your vysage

I suffre payne god wote/ ful hote brennynge
To cause my dethe/ al for my true seruyse
And I se wel/ ye recke therof nothynge
Nor take no hede of it/ in no fynde wyse
But whan I spede after my best aduyse
ye set it at nought/ but make therof a game
And thoughe I serue/ so great an entreprise
yet peyseth not your worshyp nor your fame

Alas/ what shulde it be to you preiudyce
If that a man do serue you sayth fully
To your worshyp/ eschewynge euery vyce
So am I yours/ and wyl be verily
I chalenge nought of right/ and reason why
for I am hole submyt vnto your seruyce
Right as ye lyst it be/ right so wyl I
Conforme my selfe/ where I was in fraunchise

Lamant

Though it be so/ that I can nat deserue
To haue your grace/ but alway serue in drede
yet suffre me/ you for to serue and serue
Without ony maugre/ of your most goodlyhede
Both sayth & trouth I gyue your womanhede
And my seruyce without any cessynge
Loue hath me bounde/ without wage or mede
To be your man/ and serue al other thynge

La dame

Whan this lady had herde al this language
She gaue answere/ ful softe and demurely
Without chaungynge of colour or courage
Nothynge in hast nought measurably
Me thynketh syr your thought is great foly
Purpose ye nought/ your labour for to cese
for thynketh not/ whyles ye lyue and I
In this matter/ to set your herte in peace

Lamant

There may none make the peace/ but onely ye
Whiche are the grounde & cause of al this war
for with your eyen/ the letters written be
By whiche I am defyed and put a far
your pleasaunt loke/ my very lode star
Was made herande/ of thylke same defyance
Whiche bitterly behyght me for to barre
Thy feythful trust/ and al myne assurance

La dame

To lyue in wo/ he hath great fantasy
And of his herte also slypper holde
That onely for beholdynge of an eye
Can nat abyde in peace/ as reason wolde
Other or me/ if ye lyst ye may beholde
Our eyē are made to loke/ why shuld we spare
I take no kepe/ neyther of ponge ne olde
Who seketh smerte/ I counsayle hym beware

Lamant.

If it be so/ one hurte another sore
In his defaute/ that seketh the greuaunce
Of very right/ a man may do no more
yet reason wolde it were in remembraunce
And syth fortune onely by her chaunce
Hath caused me to suffre al this payne
By your beaute/ with al the circumstaunce
Why lyst ye haue me/ in so great disdayne

La dame

To your persone/ ne haue I no disdayne
Nor neuer had trewly/ ne nought wyl haue
Nor right great loue/ nor hatred in certayne
Nor your counsayle to know/ so god me saue
yf suche loue be in your mynde ygraue
That lytel thynge/ may do you displesaunce
you to begyle/ or make you for to raue
I wyl nat cause/ no suche encombraunce

Lamant

What euer it be/ yͭ me hath thus purchased
Wenynge hath nat deserued me certayne
But feruent loue/ so sore hath me chased
That I vnware/ am caught in your chayne
And syth so is/ as fortune lyst ordayne
Al my welfare/ is in your handes fal
In eschewynge of more myschenous payne
Who soneest dyeth/ his care is lest of al

La dame

This sickenesse is right easy to endure
But fewe people/ it causeth for to dye
But what they meane/ I know we it very sure
Of more comforte/ to dialke the trouthe
Suche be there no/ playenyng ful pyteously
That sele god wote/ nat alther greatest payne

And

And if so beloue hurte so greuously
Lesse harme it were/one sorowful thā twayn

Lamant

Alas madame/if that it myght you please
Woche better it were/by way of gentylnesse
Of one sory/to make twayne wel at ease
Than hym to destroye that lyueth in distresse
For my desyre is/neyther more nor lesse
But my seruyce/to do for your plesaunce
In eschewynge al maner vnbienesse
To make two sores/in stede of one greuaūce

La dame

Of loue I sede/neyther pleasaunce nor ease
Nor haue therin no great affyaunce
Though ye be sicke/it doth me nothing please
Also I take no hede of your plesaunce
Lhese who so wyll/ her hertes to anaunce
Fre am I nowe/and free wyl I endure
To be ruled by mannes gouernaunce
For certesly good/Nay/that I you ensure

Lamant

Loue/whiche ꝑ ioy and sorowe doth departe
Hath set the ladyes out of al seruage
And largely dothe graunt hem for her parte
Lordship and rule of euery maner of age
The poore seruaūt/nought hath of auantage
But what he may gete onely by purchesse
And he that ones/ to loue doth his homage
Ful often tymes/dere bought is the richesse

La dame

Ladyes be nat so symple/ thus I mene
So dul of wyt/so sotted in foly
That for wordes/whiche sayd be of the splene
In fayre langage/ payated ful plesauntly
Whiche ye and mo/holde scholes of bayly
To make hem al/ great wonders to suppose
But some they can away/ theyr herdes wype
And to fayre speche/fyghtly theyr eres close

Lamant

There is no may/that iangleth busyly
And setteth his herte/ & al his mynde therfore
That by treason/may playne so pytously
As he that hath moche heuynesse in store
Whose herd is hole/and sayth that it is sore
His fayned chere/is harde to dyscrye in mowe
But thought/whiche is vnfayned euermore
The wordes preueth/as the workes shewe

La dame

Loue is subtel/and hath a great aweyte
Sharpe I wotsyng/i gadyng great plesaūce
And can hym chaunge/of suche as by deceyte
Wolde fele and know/his feerce gouernaūce
And maketh hem to obey his ordynaunce
By chereful wayes/as hym hem is supposed
But whan they fal in to repentaunce
Than my a rage/her counsayle is disclosed

Lamant

Sith for as moche/as god and eke nature
Hath ananuced loue/to so hye degre
Woche sharpe is the poynt/thus am I sure
Yet greueth more the faute/ where euer it be
Who hath no colde/of heate hath no deynte
The one for that other/ased is expresse
And of plesaunce/ know wel noy certeyne
But it be one / in thought and heuynesse

La dame

As for plesaunce/it is nat alway one
That you thinke swete/I thinke it vtter payne
ye may nat me cōstrayne/nor yet rygh nowe
After your lust to loue/that is but vayne
To chalenge loue by right/ was neuer seyne
But herte assent/ before bonde and promyse
For strength and force/may nat attayne
A wyl that standeth enfeffed in fraunchyse

Lamant

Rygh fayre lady/god mote I neuer please
yf I seke other right in this case
But for to shewe you playnly my desease
And your mercy to abyde/I aske your grace
If I purpose your honour to deface
Or euer dyd/god and fortune me shende
And that I neuer vnrygh fully purchase
One onely ioy/vnto my yuels ende

La dame

ye and other/that swere suche othes false
And so condempne/and curseth to and fro
Ful sperely ye were your othes lasse
No lenger than the wordes hen ago
And god/ and eke his sayntes laughe also
In suche swerynge/there is no fredfastnesse
And these wiches that haue ful trust therin
After they wepe and waylen in distresse

Lamant.

He hath no resorte of a man trewly
That seketh pleasaunce/ worshyp to dispyse
Nor to be called forthe/is not worshyp

The

Yfe ertse to touche/ ꝑ ayse in no ꝑsse wyse
A trusty herte/a mouth without feynynge
Thus be the strength of euery maner cause
And who that lacketh this sayth for ſtel preyse
Beſeeth bothe his worſhyp and his fame

La dame.

I curſed herte/a mouth that is curteyſe
Ful well ye wote they be not accordynge
Yet sapned there/right soone may hem apeyſe
Where of maiſter ye ſet al her worſhynge
Ful falſe femelant they bere/ & true ſemynge
Her name/her fame/her tongue but sapned
Worſhyp in hem is put in forgettynge
Longe repented/ not in no wiſe complayned

Lamant.

Who thinketh yſl/ no good may hym befal
God of his grace graunt eche man his deſert
But for this loue/amonge youre thoughtes al
Is thyne vpon my wofu[l] ſore wen ſmert
Yet of my payne/whether youre tender herte
Of ſwete ppte/be not ther with agreued
Ano of youre grace/to me were diſcouerte
That vp youre mean/ ſone ſhulde I be releued

La dame.

I ſhyſe ſome herte/a folly of pleſaunce
Are moche better/the leſſe whyle they abyde
They make you thinke/ſ bring you i a traunce
But that ſickeneſſe/wyl ſone be remedyed
Reſpue youre thought/and put al this aſyde
Ful good diſporte wereth me al day
To helpe my ſorte/my wyl is not apeyſed
Who tro weth not not/ I let hem paſſe away

Lamant.

Who hath a ſpide/a faucon/or a houndc
That ſolo weth him for loue in euery place
He cheriſſheth hym/ſ beateth hym ful ſounde
Out of his ſight/he wyl not him enchace
And I that ſet my wyttes on this caſe
Dy you alone/ without eny chaunge
Am put vnder/moche further out of grace
And leſſe ſet by/than eny other that be ſtraunge

La dame.

Thoughe I make chere to euery man aboute
For my worſhyp/ſ for myne owne frailtyſe
To you I wyl be ſo/ without doute
Be eſche wynge al maner pitendyſe
For wote ye well me is ſo ſtel wyſe
And my hylme ſo ſtyghtly wyl be brought
That he taketh al at his owne deuyſe
Of thinge god wote/ ꝑ ſeruith him of nought

Lamant.

yf I by loue/ and by my true ſeruyce
Leſe ꝑ good chere ꝑ ſtraungers haue alway
Wherof ſhal ſerue my trauth in any wiſe
Leſſe than to him/that cometh ſ gothe al day
Where holdeth of you nothyng/ꝑ is no nay
Alſo in you is ſoft/ as to my ſeruynge
Al curteſy/ whiche of reaſon wyl ſay
That loue for loue/ were la wful deſpringe

La dame.

Curteſy is alyed wonder nere
To worſhyp/ whiche hym loueth tenderly
And he wyl not be bounde for no playere
Nor for no gyftes/ I ſay you verely
But his good chere/departe ful largely
Where hym lyſteth/as his concepte wyl ſal
Guerdon cõſtrayned a gifte done thanſ fully
Theſe twayn cã neuer accorde nor neuer ſhal

Lamant.

As for guerdon I aſke none in this caſe
For that deſert/to me it is to hye
Wherfore I aſke your pardon ſ your grace
Sith me behoueth dethe/or your mercy
To gyue the good where it wanteth truely
That were reaſon/ and a curteyſe maniere
Ano to your owne moche better were worſhy
Tha to ſtraungers/to ſhewe hem louely chere

La dame.

What cal ye good/ſayne wolde I that I wyſt
That pleaſeth one/another ſmerteth ſore
But of his owne/to large is he that lyſt
Gyue moche/and leſe his good name therfore
One ſhulde not make a graunt/ſtel ne more
But the requeſt were right wel accordinge
yf worſhyp be not kepte and ſet before
Al that is leſtethe but a ſtel thynge

Lamant.

Yf to this worlde was founded neuer none
Nor vnder heuen creature yfore
Nat neuer ſhal/ſaue onely your perſone
To whõ your worſhip toucheth halfe ſo ſore
But me whiche haue no ſeaſon leſſe ne more
Of youthe ne age/but ſtyl in your ſeruice
Haue no eyen/no wit/nor mouth in ſtore
But al be gruen to the ſame office

La dame.

A ful great charge hath he without en fayle
That his worshyp kepeth in ſ̄ꝑuesse
But in daunger he setteth his trauayle
That seseth it with others vnkyndnesse
To hym that longeth/honour and noblesse
Vpon none other shulde nat be a wayte
For of his owne/so moche hath he the lesse
That of other/moche folo weth the conceyte

Lamant.

your eyen hath set the pynt/which that I sele
Within my hert/that where so euer I go
yf I do thynge/that so wieth vnto wele
Nedes must it come from you/ & fro no mo
Fortune wyl this/ that I for wele or wo
Thy syse endure/your merry abydynge
And very right wyl/that I thinke also
Of your worshyp/aboue a nother thynge

La dame.

To your worshyp se wel/for that is nede
That ye spende nat your season al in vayne
As touchynge myn/I rede you take no hede
Vp your folyp/to put your selfe in payne
To ouercome is good/and to restrayne
Any herte/whiche is discreued folyply
For worse it is to bireue than bowe certayne
Better bowe/than to fal sodaynly

Lamant.

Nowe sayre lady thinke/sith it first began
That loue hath set myn herte vnder his cure
It neuer might/ne truely I me can
None other serue/whyle I shal here endure
In most fre wyse/therof I make you sure
Whiche may not be withdrawe/this is no nay
I must abyde al maner aduenture
For I may neyther put to nor take away

La dame.

I holde it for no gyfte in sothfastnesse
That one offreth/where it is forsake
For suche a gifte in abandounynge expresse
That with worshyp a yen may not be take
He hath an herte ful sel that lyst to make
A gifte lyghtly/that put is to refuse
But he is wyse/that suche conceyte wyl slake
So that hym nede/neyther to studyp ne muse

Lamant.

He shulde nat muse/ꝑ hath his seruice spent
Vp her/whiche is a lady honourable
And if I spende my tyme to that entent
Yet at the lest/I am not reprouable
Of feyned herte/to thinke I am vnable
Or I myslike/whan I made this requeste
By whiche loue hath of entrepuse notable
So many hertes gotten by conqueste

La dame.

If that ye lyste do after my counsayle
Seche a sayre/and of more higher fame
Whiche in scruple of tome/wyl you perswayle
After your thought/accordynge to the same
He hurieth both his worshyp & his name
That folyply/for chaunge hi selfe wyl trouble
And he also ieseth his after game
That surely can not set his poynte double

Lamant.

This your counsayle/by ought that I can se
Is better said than done/to myne aduyse
Thoughe I dyscure it not/forgyue it me
Myne herte is suche/so hole without feynedyse
That I ne may giue credence in no wise
To thynge/which is not so wonnd vnto truthe
Other counsayle I se/be but fantasise
Saue of your grace/to shewe ppte and ruthe

La dame.

I holde him wyse that worketh no folye
And whan hym lyst/can leue & parte therfro
But in commynge/he is to serue truely
That wolde hym selfe conduite/I can not so
And he that wyl not after counsayle do
His sute he putteth in to disperaunce
And al the good that shulde fal hym to
Is lost and dred/clene out of remembraunce

Lamant.

Yet wyl I serue this matter sayth fully
Whyles I lyue/what euer be my chaunce
And if it hap/that in my trouthe I dye
Than dethe shal do me no displesaunce
But whan that I/by your harde sufferaunce
Shal dye so true and with so great a payne
yet shal it do me moche the lesse grenaunce
Than for to lese a false louer certayne

La dame.

Of me get ye right nought/this is no fable
I wyl to you be neyther harde ne sharpe
And right wyl/not no maner resonable
To thynke ye shulde/be sure of my conceyte
Who so hath sure we/hys is the ryche
Other counsayle can I not fele nor se

Lat

Son fot to louer I cast me not to abuyde
Who wyll therof/let hym assay for me

Lamant.

Dame wyll it be assayde that is no may
With suche as be of reputacyon
And of true loue/the right honour to pay
Of sere seruice gotten by dere raunsome
For seruyll hotteth that oppressyon
That it is great duresse and displesante
To kepe a gentyll in so straytes a prysen
That hath put his body for his disposte

La dame.

I know so many causes marueylous
That I must nede of reason thynke certayne
That suche auenture is wonder perylous
And yet wel more/the rompynge dare agayne
Good or worshyp/therof so seldome sene
Where I me wyll make suche assay
As for to fynde a pleasaunce/but a baraygne
Whan it shal cost so dere the fyrst assay

Lamant.

Ye haue no cause to doute of this mater
Sins you to wynne with no suche fantasyse
To put me farre al out as a straunger
For your goodnesse can thynke s wel aduyse
That I haue made a pure in euery wyse
By whiche my truthe shewith open euydence
Thy longe abydynge/and my trewe seruyce
That wel be knowen by playne experience

La dame.

Of very right he may be called true
And so must he be take in euery place
That can deserue/and let as he me sue
And kepe the good/if he it may purchase
For who that purseth/or swerueth in any case
Right wel ye wote/in ꝑ no trouth is pursued
Suche shall there fayl/and are ꝑ gyuen grace
And lese al sone/whan they haue it atchened

Lamant.

Al truthe me cause/by vertue sourayne
To shewe good loue/s alway synde contrary
And cherysh yt/which sheth me with ꝑ payne
This is to me a lowely aduersary
Whan that pure/which long on serue doth tary
Hath set the fyne of al my heuynesse
Let me comfort to me most necessary
Sith yt my wyll wyth sure in stablenesse

La dame.

The woful knight/what may he thynke or say
The contrary of al ioy and gladnesse
A sycke body/she thought is alway
From hym that felyth no sore nor sykenesse
Thus hurtes hey of dyuers busynesse
Whiche lone hath put to great hyndraunce
And truthe also/out in forgetfulnesse
Whan they ful sore begyn to sighe assaunce

Lamant.

Now we god defende/but he be harmlesse
Of al worshyp or good that may befal
That to werst tourneth by his lewdnesse
A gyfte of grace/or any thynge at al
That his lady vouchesafe vpon hym cal
Or cherysheth hym in honourable wyse
In that defaute/what euer he be that fal
Deserueth more than dethe to suffre twyse

La dame.

There is no ruge yet on suche trespace
By whiche of right/lone may recouered be
One curseth fast/another dothe manace
yet dyeth none/as farre as I can se
But kepe her course alway in one degre
And euermore/theyr fauour dothe encrease
To bunge ladyes by their great subtelte
For others gilte/in foto we and disease

Lamant.

Albeit so sone dothe so great offence
And is not deed/nor put to no iustyce
Right wel I wote hym gayneth no defence
But he must ende in ful myscheuous wise
And al euer sayd/god wyll hym dispise
For falsshed is ful of cursednesse
That his worshyp may neuer haue enterprise
Where it reigneth/s hath the wyfulnesse

La dame.

Of that haue they no great fere now a dayse
Suche as wyl say and mayntayne it therto
That stedfast truthe is nothyng for to prayse
In hem that kepe al longe in wele or wo
Theyr busy feres passen to and fro
They be so wel ychayned to the lure
So wel formed hem to withholde also
And al to chaunge/whē lone shuld best endure

Lamant.

What one hath set his herte in stable wyse
In suche a place/as is dothe good and ryght
He shulde not slyp/but do forth his seruice

Eeeeiij Alway

Alway without chaunge of any newe
As sone as loue begynneth to renewe
Al plesaunce gothe anone in lytel spare
As for my partie/that shal I eschewe
Whyle the soule abideth in his place

La dame.

To loue truely/there as it ought of right
Ye may not be myslaben doutlesse
But ye be soule disceyued in your sight
By sight vnderstandyng/as I gesse
yet may ye wel repele your busynesse
And to reason haue some attendaunce
Woche better than to abide by soly simplenes
The feble socour of disperaunce

Lamant.

Reason/counsayle/wisedome/& good aduyse
Ben vnder loue arrested euerychone
To whiche I can accorde in euery wise
For they be not rebel/but fryl as a stone
Their wyl and myne/be medled al in one
And ther with bouden with so strong a cheyne
That as in hem/departynge shal be none
But pyte breke the mighty bonde atwayne

La dame.

Ye loue not your selfe/what euer ye be
That in loue stande forgete in euery place
And of your wo/if ye haue no pyte
Others pyte bileue ye not to purchace
But be fully assured/as in this case
I am alway vnder one ordynaunce
To haue better trust not after grace
And al that leueth/take to your plesaunce

Lamant.

I haue my hope so sure and so stedfast
That suche a lady shulde not lacke pyte
But nowe alas/it is shyt vp so fast
That daunger sheweth on me his cruelte
And if she se the vertue fayle in me
Of true seruyce/thoughe she do fayle also
No wonder were/but this is my surrete
I must suffre/ whiche way that euer it go

Lamant.

Leue this puposse I rede you for the best
For the lenger ye bepe/it is in vayne
The lesse ye gete/as of your hertes rest
And to recoyre it shal you neuer attayne
Whan ye abide good hope to make you fayne
Ye shal be founde asotted in dotage
And in the ende/ye shal knowe for certayne
Hope shal pay the wretches for her wage

Lamant.

Ye say as fallethe most for your plesaunce
And your power is great/al this I se
But hope shal neuer out of my remembraunce
By whiche I fele so great aduersyte
For whan nature hathe set in you plente
Of al goodnesse/by vertue and by grace
He neuer assembled hem/as semed me
To put pyte out of his dwellynge place

La dame.

Pyte of right ought to be resonable
And to no wight do no great disauauntage
There as is nede/it shulde be prospitable
And to the pitous shewynge no damage
If a lady wyl do so great outrage
To shewe pyte and cause her owne debate
Of suche pyte cometh disputous rage
And of suche loue/also right deedly hate

Lamant.

To comforte hem that lyue al comfortlesse
That is no harme/but cõforte to your name
But ye that haue a herte of suche duresse
And a sayre lady I must affirme the same
If I durst say/ ye wynne al this defame
By cruelte/whiche sitteth you ful yl
But if pyte/whiche may al this attame
In your high herte may rest and tary fyl

La dame.

What euer he be that sayth he sourth me
And peraduenture I leue wel it be so
Ought he be wroth/or shulde I blamed be
Thoughe I dyd not as he wolde haue me do
If I medled with suche or other mo
It might be called pyte mercyelesse
And afterwarde if I shulde lyue in wo
Than to repent/it were to late I gesse

Lamant.

O marble herte/and yet more harde parde
Whiche mercy may not perce for no labour
More stronge to bowe than is a mygsty tre
What auayleth you to shewe so great rigour
Pleaseth it you more to se me dye thus sour
Before your eyen/for your disporte and play
Than for to shewe some comforte and socour
To respyte deithe/whiche chaseth me alway

La dame.

Of

Of your disease/ ye may haue allegeaunce
And as for myne/ I let it ouer slide
Also ye shal not dye for my plesaunce
Nor for your heale/ I care no surely mede
I wyl not hurte my selfe for others sede
Wepe they/ laugh they/ or synge they/ I warãt
For this matter/ so wyl I vnderstãde
That none of hem shal make therof auaunt

Lamant.

I can not sey of loue by god alone
I haue more cause to wepe in your presence
And wel ye wote/ auauntour am I none
For certaynly/ I loue better silence
Our shulde not loue by his hertes credence
But he were sure to kepe it secretly
For a vãuntour is of no reuerence
Whan that his tonge is his most enemy

La dame. (ment

Male bouche in courte/ hath great cõmaunde
Eche man studieth to say the worst he may
These false sclaues/ in this tyme nowe present
They serue best to iangle as a Jay
The most secrete pwes/ yet some men say
Howe he mistrusted is in some partise
Wherfore to ladies whan so men spekc or say
It shulde be spleued in no wyse

Lamant.

Of good and yl shal be/ and is alway
The worlde is suche/ ꝑ erth is not al playne
They that be good/ ꝑ praise shewith euery day
And other wise great villony certayne
It is reason/ thoughe one his tonge distayne
With cursed speche/ to do hym selfe a shame
That suche refuse/ shuld wrongfully remayne
Upon the good renoumed in theyr fame

La dame. (newe

Sure as be nought/ whã they here tydynges
That eche trespas shal lightly haue pardon
They that pursuy to be good and trewe
Wyl not set by none yl disposition
To continue in euery good condition
They are the first that falsen in damage
And sul frely the hertes habandon
To spitt faithe/ with softe and fayre langage

Lamant.

Howe euer it be I wel of very certaynte
If one be trusty/ yet shal he be shente
Bith al maner of infame and pryde
Is banysshed out of a ladyes entente
I say not se/ but al is at one stente
The good/ the yl/ the fayre/ ꝑ eke the vertue
Sure as be good/ shal haue the punysshmẽt
For the trespas of hem that lyue vntrue

La dame.

I haue no power you to do greuaunce
Nor to punysshe none other creature
But to eschewe the more encombraunce
To kepe me from you al/ I holde it sure
False semblaunce/ hath a face ful demure
Lightly to catche these ladyes in a wayte
Wherfore we must/ if we wyl here endure
Make right good watch/ so this is my cõcepte

Lamant.

Sith that of grace/ a goodly worde nat one
May no we be had/ but alway kepte in floze
I appele to god/ for he may here my mone
Of the durresse/ whiche greueth me so sore
And of pyte/ I complayne furthermore
Whiche he forgate/ in al his ordynaunce
Dr elos my spyse to haue ended before
Whiche so sone am put out of remembraunce

La dame.

By herte nor I haue done you no forsepte
By which ye shulde complayne in any ꝑte
Nothing hurteth you/ but your owne cõcepte
Be inge your selfe/ for so ye shal it fynde
Thus alway set this synke in your mynde
That your desyre shal neuer recouered be
Ye nop me sore/ in wastinge al this wynde
For I haue sayd ynoughe/ as semeth me

Lamant.

This wofal man rose vp in al his payne
And so departed with weppinge countenaunce
His wofal herte/ almost to brast in twayne
Ful spyte to dye/ walkynge forth in a traunce
And sayd dethe come forth/ thy selfe auaunce
Dr that myne herte forgete his properte
And make shatter al this wofal penaunce
Of my pore spyse/ ful of aduersyte

Fro thẽce he went/ but whither wist I nought
Nor to what parte he drewe in sothfastnesse
But he no more was in his ladyes thought
For to the daunce anone she gan her dresse
And afterwarde/ one tolde me thus expresse
She rent his herte/ for anguysshe and for payne

Explicit. And

And in hym selfe tolde so great heuynesse
That he was deed within a day or twayne

¶ Lennoy.

The true louers thus I beseche you al
Such auentures flie hem in euery wise
And as people defamed ye hem cal
For they truely do you great preiudyse
His castelles stronge stuffed with ordinaunce
For they haue had longe tyme by theyr offyce
The hole countre of loue in obeysaunce

And ye ladyes/or what estate ye be
Of whom worshyp hath chose his dwellynge
For goddes loue do no such cruelte (place
Nor in no wyse ne soule not the trace
Of her that herr is named right wysly
Whiche by reason me semeth in this cace
May be called/La belle dame sans mercy.

Go lytel boke/god sende the good passage
Chese wel thy way/be symple of manere
Lose thy clothynge be lyke thy pylgrimage
And specyally let this be thy prayere
Vnto hem al/that the wyl rede or here
Where thou arte wronge after her helpe to cal
The to correcte in any parte or al

Pray hem also with thyne humble seruyce
Thy boldnesse to pardon in this cace
For els thou arte not able in no wyse
To make thy selfe appere in any place
And furthermore beseche hem of her grace
By her fauour and supportacyon
To take in gre this rude translacion

The which god wote standeth ful destytute
Of eloquence/of meter/and colours
Lyke as a beest naked without refute
Vpon a playne to abyde al maner showres
I can no more/but as be of hem socours
At whose request thou were made in this wise
Commaundynge me with body and seruyse

Right thus I make an ende of this prosses
Besechynge hym/that al hath in balaunce
That no treue many be beyed confessyon
As thes many dayes/which is of remembraunce
And al that done her forth ful obseruaunce
And in her trouth purpose hem to endure
I pray god sende hem better auenture.

¶ Explicit.

Of quene Anne. lida and false Arcite,

O Thou fayre god of armes Mars yede
That in thy frosty coūtre called Trace
Within thy grisly temples ful of drede
Honoured arte as patron of that place
With the Bellona Pallas ful of grace
Be present / and my songe contynue & gyde
At my begynnynge thus to the I crye

For it ful depe is sonken in my mynde
With pytous herte in Englysshe to endyte
This olde story / in latyn whiche I fynde
Of quene Anneleyda and false Arcite
That elde / whiche al can frete and byte
And it hath freten many a noble story
Hath nygh deuoured out of our memory

Be fauourable eke thou Polymnia
On Pernaso that hath thy sytte glode
Of Elycon/ not farre from Cirfa
Suggest with Ioyer memorial in the shade
Vnder the sauter/ whiche that may not fade
And do that I my style to hauen wynne
Fyrst folowe I Stace/ & after hym Lorynne

Iamq; domos patrias Lethie post aspera gentis/Prelea laurigero subarente Thesea curru
Letitia plausus vulgusq; ad sidera tollit.

Whan Theseus with warres longe gone
The aspre folke of Lethe hath ouercome
The Laurer crowned in his chayre gan bide
Home to his countre homward to come
For whiche the people shyssel al and some
So cryden / that to the sterres it wente
And hym to honouren dyd al her entente

Dyon

Before this duke in signe of victorie
The trompes came/and in his baner large
The ymage of Mars/and in token of glorie
Wan might se of trefour many a charge
Wan a wight helme/ & many a spere & targe
Wan a fresshe knight/ & many a blisful route
On horse and on foote/ in al the felde aboute

Ipolyta his wyfe/the hardy queue
Of Lithya/that he conquered had
Was Emelie her ponge suster shene
Joyse in a chare of golde he with him lad
That al the grounde about her chare she spradd
With bughtnesse of beautie in her face
Ful syker of largesse and of grace

With his triumphe and lauree crowned thus
In al the floure of fortunes pouping
Lat I this noble prince Theseus
Toward Athenes in his way ryding
And fonde I wol in shortly to bring
The ferye way of that I gan to write
Of queue Anelida and false Arcyte

Wars ȳ throngh his furpous course of yre
The olde wrathe of Juno to fulfyl
Hath set the peoples hertes both on fyre
Of Thebes and Grece/ & encrich other to spyl
With blody speares rested neuer fyrl (bothe
But throng now here now there amonge hem
That euerysche other slew/so were they wrothe

For whan Amphiorap and Tydeus
Ipomedon/and Partynope also
Were dede/ and slayne proude Campaneus
And whan the wretched thebane brethern two
Were slayne/and kyng Adrastus home ago
So desolate stode Thebes and so bare
That no wight conde remedye of his care

And whan the olde Creon gan espye
How ȳ the blode royal was brought adoun
He seide that cyte by his tyrannye
And dyd the gentyls of that regioun
To bery his frendes/and abod in the toun
So what for loue of him/and what for awe
The nobles selde him to the to lose power

Amonge al these Anelyda the quene
Of Ermonye/was in that towne dwellyng
That fayer was than the sonne shene
Throughout ȳ world so gan her name spring
That her to se had euery wight lykyng
For as of trouthe is there none her lyche
Of al the women in this worlde ryche

Yonge was this queue/ of twenty yere olde
Of myddle stature/and of suche fayrenesse
That nature had a lope her to beholde
And for to speken of her stedfastnesse
She passed hath Penelope/and Lucresse
And shortly if she shal ben comprehended
In her might nothyng ben amended

This Theban knight ese sothe to sayne
Was ponge/and therto withal a lusty knight
But he was double in loue/ & nothing playne
And subtyl in that craste ouer any wight
And with his conuyng wan this lady bright
For so ferforthe he gan her trouthe assure
That she him trusteth ouer any creature

What shulde I sayne/she loueth Arcyte so
That whan that he was absent any throwe
Anon her thought her herte brast a two
For in her syght to her he bare him lowe
So that she wende haue al his herte yknowe
But he was false/it nas but sayned chere
As nedeth not suche craste men to lere

But neuertheleste ful myssel besynesse
Had he/ er that he might his lady wynne
And swore he wolde dyen for distresse
Or from his wytte he sayd he wolde twynne
Alas the whyle/ for it was routhe and synne
That she vpon his sorow wolde rewe
But nothing thinketh the false as doth ȳ trewe

Her fredom sounde Arcyte in suche manere
That al was his/that she hath moche ayte
Ne to no creature made she chere
Further than it syked to Arcyte (wyte
There was no lacke/ wist which he might her
She was so ferforthe penen him to plese
That al that syked him/dyd her ese

Then

There nas to her no maner letter sent
That touched loue/from any maner wight
That she ne shewed hym or it was brent
So playne she was/and dyd her ful might
That she nyl hyde nothyng from her thought
Leste he of any vntrouthe her vpbrepde
Without bode his herte she obeyde

And eke he made hym ialous ouer her
That what that any man had to her sayde
Anon he wolde prayen her to swere
What was ꝑ worde/or mase hym pleyn ayde
Thay wende she out of her wytte haue mayde
But al was but sleyght and flaterye
Without loue he sayned trouthe

And al this toke she so debonairly
That al his wyl/her thought it ꝑfyt thyng
And euer the lenger she loued hym tenderly
And dyd hym honour as he were a kyng
Her herte was to hym wedded with a ryng
For so ferforthe vpon trouthe is her entrut
That where he gothe/her herte with hym went

Whan she shal eate/on hym is so her thought
That wel vneth of meate tooe she bepe
And whan she was to her rest brought
On hym she thought alway tyl that she slepe
Whan he was absent/pruely bothe she wepe
Thus lyueth fayre Annelyda the queue
For false Arcyte/ that dyd her al this tene

This false Arcyte/ of his newfangelnesse
For she to hym so lowly was and trewe
Tooe lesse deyne for her stedfastnesse
And sawe another lady proude and newe
And right anon he clad hym in her hewe
Wote I not whether in whyte/reed/or grene
And falsed fayre Annelyda the quene

But neuertheleſſe/great wonder was it none
Though he were false/for it is ꝑ kynde of mã
Sythe Lameth was/that is so longe agone
To be in loue as false as euer he can
He was the first father that began
To louen two/ and was in bigamye
And he founde tentes first/but if myn eye

This false Arcyte/ somwhat muſte he fayne
Whan he was false/to couerye his treytoure
Right as my horse/that can both byte & playne
For he bare her in honde of trecherye
And swore he coude her doublenesse eſpye
And al was falsnesse that she to hym ment
Thus swore this theſe & forth his way he wit

Alas/what herte might endure it
For routhe or woe/her sorowe for to tel
Or what man hath the cunnyng or the wyt
Or what may might withyn ꝑ chamore dwel
If I to hym rehersen shal the qui
That suffreth fayre Annelyda the quene
For false Arcyte/that dyd al this tene

She weepeth/wayleth/& swouneth pitouſly
To grounde dere she falleth as a stone
Trampyſſheth her tymmes erobely
She speketh as her wytte were al agone
Other colour than asshen hath she none
Ne none other worde speketh she moche or lyte
Out merry cruel herte myn Arcyte

And thus endureth/tyl that she was so mate
That she ne hath foote/ on which she may sta
But forth lãguiſſhing euer I this eſtate (stone
Of whathe Arcyte hath neyther routhe ne tene
His herte was els where newe and grene
That on her wo/ne depneth hym not to thinke
Hym recheth neuer whether she slete or swinke

This newe lady holdeth hym so narowe
Vp by the bridel/ at the staues ende
That euery worde he dred it as an arowe
Her daunger made hym both bowe and bende
And as her liste/made hym turne or wende
For she ne graunted hym in her lyuyng
No grace/ why that he hath to lyue

But drouw hym forthe/ vneth hyl her knowe
That he was seruaunt vnto her ladyſhyp
But leſte he were proude/she helde hym lowe
Thus serueth he/ without mede or lyp
She sente hym nowe to sende/ & nowe to fetch
And for she pane hym daunger al his lyf
Therfore she had hym al her owne wyl

Enfor-

Enſaumple of this/ye thrifty woman al
Take hede of Anneyda and falſe Arcyte
That for her fyſt fyre/ her dere herte gat
And was ſo meke/ therfore he found her lyte
The fynde of mannes herte is to deſyre
Dy thyng that ſtraunge is/ alſo god me ſaue
For what they may not get/ y wold they haue

Nowe turne we to Anneyda ayen
That pyneth day by day in langueſſyng
But whan ſhe ſawe that her ne gate no gryn
Vpon a day ful ſorouſfully wepyng
She caſt her for to make a complaynyng
And writh her owne hande ſhe gan it write
And ſente it to her theban knyght Arcyte.

¶ The complaynt of Anneyda to falſe Arcyte.

So thryſled with the poynt of remembraūce
The ſwerde of ſorowe/ what wt falſe pleſaūce
Dyn herte hath of Elyſſe/ and blache of hewe
That turned is to queſtyng al my daunce
Dy ſo trayterey a waped countenaunce
Was it maydeth nought to ben trewe
For who ſo trewe is/ ſhal her trewe
That ſerueth fonne/ and dothe her obſeruaunce
Alway to none/ and chaungeth for no newe

I wote my ſelfe as wel as eny wyght
For I ſerued one/ with al myn herte and myght
More than my ſelfe/ an hundred thouſande ſyth
And called hym my hertes lyfe/ my knyght
And was al his/ as herte as it was tyght
And whan he was glad/ than was I blythe
And his diſeaſe was my dethe as ſwythe
And he ayen/ his trouthe hath me plyght
For euermore his lady me to kythe

Nowe is he falſe alas/ and rauiſhed
And of my wo he is ſo routhleſs
That with a worde fyn fyſt not mes bayne
To bring ayen my ſorouful herte in pes
For he is caught vp in an other leſs
Right as fyn fyſt he langheth at my payne
And I ne can myn herte not reſtrayne
For to ſerue hym yet alway neuertheles
And of al this I not to whom to playne

And ſhulde I playne/ alas the harde ſtounde
Vnto my foe/ that pane myn herte a wounde
And yet deſyreth that myn harme be more
Nowe certes further wot I neuer be founde
None other helpe/ my ſoure ſore to founde
Dy deſtiny hath ſhaped ſo ful pore
I wot nonkother medecyne ne lore
I wot ben apt there I was ones bounde
That I ſhulde ſayd/ be ſayd for euermore

Alas/ where is become your gentyleſſe
Your wordes ful of pleſaunce and humbleſſe
your obſeruaunce in ſo lowe manere
your awayting/ and your beſyneſſe
Dy me/ that ye called your mayſtreſſe
Your ſouerayne lady in this worlde here
Alas/ is there neyther worde ne chere
ye vouchſafe vpon myn heuyneſſe
Alas your lowe/ I bye it al to dere

Nowe certes ſwete/ though that ye
Thus cauſeleſſe the cauſe be
Of my derely aduerſyte
your manly traſon ought it to reſpyte
To ſle your frende/ and namely me
That neuer yet in no degre
Offended you/ as wiſly he
That al wote/ of wo my ſoule quyte

But for I was ſo playne Arcyte
In al my wordes worthe and ſyte
And was ſo beſy you to delyte
Dy honour ſaue/ meke/ fynde/ and fre
Therfore ye put in me this wyte
Alas/ ye rewthe not a myte
Though that the ſwerde of ſorowe byte
Dy woful herte/ through your cruelte

Dy ſwete for/ why do ye ſo for ſhame
And thynke ye that furthered be your name
To ſlone a newe/ and ben vntrewe aye
And put you in ſlaunder newe and blame
And do to me aduerſyte and greme
That ſone you meſſe/ god thou wotte al wayes
yet turne ayen/ and yet be playne ſone dayes
And thay ſhal thus y nowe is myn ben gayne
And al forgyuen/ whyle I lyue maye

To ſette

To herte myn/ al this is for to sayne
As whether shal I pray or els playne
Whiche is the way to done you to be trewe
For eyther mote I haue you in my chayne
Or with the dethe ye mote departe be twayne
There bethe none other meane wayes newe
For god so wysely on my soule rewe
As verely ye sleen me with the payne
That nowe ye se on sayned an myn hewe

For thus ferforth haue I my dethe sought
Wyth selfe I murder with my puny thought
For sorowe and routhe of your vnkyndnesse
I wepe/ I wayle/ I faste/ al helpeth naught
I voyde ioy that is to speke of aught
I voyde company/ I flye gladnesse
Who may auaunt her better of heynesse
Than I/ and to this plite haue ye me brought
Without gylte/ me nedeth no wytnesse

And shulde I pray/ and wepen womanhede
Nay rather dethe/ than do so foule a dede
And aske mercy and gyltlesse/ what nede
And if I playne what lyse I lede
you recketh not/ that knowe I out of drede
And if I vnto you myn othes bede
For myn excuse/ a scorne shal be my mede
Your chere flouteth/ but it wol not sede
Ful longe agon I might haue taken hede

For though I had you to morowe agayne
I might as wel holde Apul from rayne
As holde you to maken stedfast
Almighty god/ of trouthe the sourrayne
Wher is the trouth of man/ who hath it slayne
She that hem louyth/ shal hem synde as fast
As in a tempest is a rotten mast
Is that a tame beest/ that is aye fayne
To renne away/ whan he is lest agaste

Nowe merry swete/ if I missay
Haue I aught sayd out of the way
I not/ my wyttes al away
I fare as dothe the songe of chaunteplure
For nowe I playne/ and nowe I play
I am so mased that I dey
Arcyte hath borne away the key
Of al my worlde/ & my good auenture

For in this worlde there lyue no creature
Walkyng in more desconsylure
Than I/ ne more sorowe endure
For if I slepe a furlonge way or twey
Than thynketh me that your fygure
Before me stante clad in asure
Este to profre a newe assure
For to ben trewe/ and mercy me to prey

The longe nyght/ thise wonder fyght I dryze
That on the day for fere affray I dye
And of al this right naught I wys ye wrthe
Ne neuermore myn eyen two ben drye
And to your routhe/ & to your trouthe I crye
But welaway/ to ferre ben they to fetche
Thus holdeth me my destyne a wretche
But me to rede out of this drede or gyle
Ne may my wyt (so weake is it) not stretche

Than rede I thus/ sythe I may do nomore
I preue it vp for nowe and euermore
For I shal neuer efte putten in balaunce
Wyth sykernesse/ ne lerne of loue the lore
But as the swan/ I haue herde say ful yore
Ayenst his dethe wol synge in his penaunce
So synge I here the desclaundre and chaunce
Howe that Arcyte Anneldya so sore
Hath thulled with the poynt of remembraunce

Whan that Anneldya this wofal quene
Hath of her handes written in this wyse
With face dred/ bet wyne pale and grene
She fel a swoune/ and sythe she gan to ryse
And vnto Mars anon with sorrowful eyen
Within the temple/ with a sorowful chere
That shapen was/ as ye may plainly here.

¶ Explicit.

The assemble of ladies.

In September at the fallyng of the lefe
The fressh season was al togyder doon
And of the corne was gathered the sheefe
In a gardyne aboute twayne after noone
Ther were ladyes walkyng/as was her woone
Foure in nombre/as to my mynde dothe fal
And I the fyfthe/the symplest of hem al

Of gentilwomen sayne there were also
Disportyng hem/enterychc after her gyse
In trosse alleys walkyng by two and two
And some alone/after her fantasyse
Thus occupyed we were in dyuers wyse
And yet in trouthe we were not al alone
There were knyghtes & squiers many one

Wherof I served/one of hem asked me
I sayd ayen/as it fel in my thought
To walke aboute the mase in certayne
As a woman that nothyng rought
He asked me ayen whom that I sought
And of my colour/why I was so pale
Forsothe (qd I) and therby lythe a tale

That must me wete (qd he) and that anone
Tel on let se/and make no tarryeng
Abyde (quod I) ye ben a hasty one
I let you wete it is no lytel thyng
But for because ye haue a great longyng
In your desyre/this processe for to here
I shal you tel the playne of this matere

It happed thus/that in an after noone
My felawshyp and I by one assent
When al other besynesses were doone
To passe our tyme/in to this mase we went
And toke our wayes/ethe after our entent
Some went inward/& went they had gon out
Some stode in the myd/and loked al aboute

And sothe to say/some were ful fayre behynde
And right anon as forthe as the beste
Other there were so maysd in her mynde
Alwayes were good for hem bothe est & west
Thus went they forthe/and had but lytel rest
And some her courage byd hem fore assayle
For very wrathe/they byd slep ouer the rayle

And as they sought hem selfe to and fro
I gate my selfe a lytel auauntage
Al for werped I might no further go
Though I had won right great for my viage
So came I forthe in to a strayte passage
Whiche brought me to an herber fayre & grene
Made with benches ful crafty and clene

That as me thought/there might no creature
Deuyse a better/by dewe proporcioun
Dase it was closed wel I you ensure
With masonrye/of compace enuyroun
Ful secretly with flayres goyng doun
In myddes ye place/wt turning whele certayn
And vpon that a potte of Margelayne

With margarites growyng in ordynaunce
To shewe hem selfe/as folke went to and fro
That to beholde it was a great plesaunce
And howe they were accompanyed with mo
Ne momblynesse and soueneesse also
The poure penses were not disloged there
Ne god wote her place was euery where

The flore & benche was paued fayre & smoth
With stones square/of many dyuers hewe
So wel ioyned/that for to say the sothe
Al semed one/that none other vse we
And vnderneth the streames newe & newe
As syluer bright/spryngyng in suche a wyse
That whence it came/ye conde it not deuyse

A lytel whyle was I al alone
Beholdyng wel the delectable place
Wyl felawshyp were comyng euerychone
So musle me nedest abyde for a space
Remembryng of many dyuers cace
Of tyme passed/with sythes depe
I set me down/and there I sel a slepe

And as I slept/me thought there came to me
A gentylwoman/mekely of stature
Of great wauhyp she semed for to be
Atyred wel/not hygh but by measure
Her countenaunce ful sadde and demure
Her colours like wise/al that she had vpon
There came no mo but her selfe alone

Her

Her gowne wel was embrandied certainly
With stones after her owne deuyse
In her pursyl/her worde by and by
(Bien et loyalment) as I coude deuyse
Than prayde I her in any maner wyse
That of her name I might haue remembrance
She sayd she was called Perseueraunce

So furthermore to speke was I bolde
Where she dwelled/I prayed her for to say
And she agayne ful curtesly me tolde
Hyr dwellyng is/and hath be many a day
With a lady: What lady I you pray:
Of great estate/thus warne I you (qd she)
What cal ye her: Her name is Loyalte

In what office stande ye/ or in what degre:
(Qd I to her) that wolde I wete right fayne
I am (quod she) vn worthy though I be
Of her chambre her husshier in certayne
This rodde I beare/as for a token playne
I vse as ye vno we the rule in suche seruyce
Apertaynyng is to the same office

She charged me by her cõmaundement
To warne you/and your felawes euerichone
That ye shulde come there as she is present
For a counsayle/whiche shal be now anone
Or seuen dayes be comen and gone
And furthermore/she bad that I shulde say
Excuse there might be none nor delay

Another thyng was not forget behynde
Whiche in no wyse I wolde but ye it vnderstande
Remembre wel/and beare it in your mynde
Al your felawes and ye muste come in vnder
Euery lyche able/your maters for to se we
With more/whiche I pray you thynke vpon
Your wordes on your sleues euerychon

And be not abasshed in no maner wyse
As many ben/in suche an hyghe presence
Vse your requeste/as ye can best deuyse
And she gladly wol yeue you audyence
There is no greue/nor no maner offence
Wherin ye fele that your herte is displeased
But with her helpe/right sone ye shal be eased

I am right glad (quod I) ye tel me this
But there is non of vs that knoweth the way
As of your way (qd she) ye shal not mys
Ye shal haue to gyde you day by day
Of my felawes/I can no better say
Suche one as shal tel you the waye ful right
And Diligence this gentyl woman hight

A woman of right famous gouernaunce
And wel cherysshed/I tel you in certayne
Her felaushyp shal do you great plesaunce
Her porte is suche/her maners true we a playne
She with glad chere wol do her besy payne
To bring you there/now farwel I haue done
Abyde sayd I/ye may not go so sone

Why so (quod she) and I haue ferre to go
To yeue warnyng in many dyuers place
To your felawes/and so to other mo
And wel ye wote I haue but lytel space
Now we yet (qd I) ye must tel me this cace
If we shal any mo vnto vs cal
Not one (qd she) may come amonges you al

Not one than sayd I/eyghe benedicite
What haue I done/I pray you tel me that
Now we vp my lyfe I trowe but wel (qd she)
But ouer I can vyewe there is somwhat
And for to say you trouthe more can I not
In questyons I may nothyng be to large
I muste no further than my charge

Than thus (quod I) do me to vnderstande
What place is there this lady is dwellyng
For sothe (qd she) a one sought al this lande
Iapiter is none/though it were for a dyng
Deuysed wel/and that in euery thyng
The toures fyr/ful pleasaunt shal ye fynde
With phanes fresshe/turnyng w[t] euery wynde

The chambres and parlers of a sorte
W[t] bay wyndowes/goodly as may be thought
As for daunsyng/and other wyse to sporte
The galeryes right wel ywrought
That wel I wote/if ye were in yder brought
And take good hede therof in euery wyse
Ye wol it thynke a verry paradyse

Shal

What sight ȳ place (qȳ I) no we say me that
Pleasaunt regarde (qȳ she) to sel you playne
Of every trouth (quod I) and wotyng what
I may right well be called so anteyne
But furthermore this would I wyt right fayn
What I shulde do as sone as I come there
And after whom I may best enquere

A gentylwoman/a porter of the gate
There shal ye fynde/her name is Loue trouthe
If ye so hap ye come esy on late
Of her were gode to haue some acquaintaūce
She can you tel how we ye shal you anaunce
And ho we so come to her ladyes presence
To her woldes I rede ye gyue credence

Now it is tyme I parte you fro
For my good fayth I haue great busynesse
I wote right well (quod I) that it is so
And I thanke you of your great gentylnesse
your comforte hath pourȳ me hardynesse
That now we I shal be bolde withouten fayle
To do after your aduyce and good counsayle

Thus parted she/and I lefte al alone
With that I sawe (as I behel de afyde)
A woman come a pery goodly one
And forth withal as I had her aspyde
(Me thought) amone it shulde be the gyde
And of her name anone I dyd enquere
Ful womanly she gaue me this answere

I am (quod she) a symple creature
Sent from the countesse name is Diligence
To sone as I might come I you ensure
I taryed not after I had spoken
And now we that I am come to your presence
Lete what seruyce I can do at nede
Commaunde me/I can no further sprede

I thanked her/and prayed her to come nere
Because I wolde se how she was araye
For go my mynd ful we dressed in good maners
With her beryall/her wimple also right fayre
(Mont que ie puise) and I wote wel apayde
And thus with I withouten any more
I knew ful ere we that I had spoke before

Though we take no we before a lytel space
I were ful good (quod she) as I coude gesse
How we farre (qȳ I) haue we vnto the place?
A dayes iourney (quod she) but lytel lesse
Wherfore I rede that we outwarde dresse
For I suppose our felawshyp is past
And for nothyng I wolde not we were ȳ last

Than departed we at the springyng of ȳ day
And forth we wente softe and esy pace
Tyl at the last we were on our iourney
So far outwarde/ that we might se the place
Now let vs rest (quod I) a lytel space
And say we as deuoutly as we can
A Pater noster for fayent Iulyan

With al my herte I assent with good wyl
Quod better shal we spede/wha we haue done
Than taryed we/and sayd it euery dyl
And whan the day was past farre after none
We sawe a place/and thyder came we sone
Whiche rounde about was closed with a wal
Semynge to me ful lyke an hospital

There foude I one had brought al myn aray
(A gentylwoman of myne acquaintaunce)
I haue meruayle (quod I) what maner way
ye had vnto lodge of al this ordenaunce
Pes pes (quod she) I herde Perseueraunce
How she warned her felawes euerychone
And what aray ye shulde haue vpon

Now for my loue (quod I) this I you pray
Sith ye haue take vpon you al the payne
That ye wolde fetche me on with myne aray
For wyt ye wel I wolde be gone right fayne
Al this prayer neded not certayne
(Quod she) agayne/come of ȳ ye shal sone
And ye shal se anone it shal be done

Dowithin I bouȳ me greatly/wote ye what
That my felawes be passed by and gone
I thinke you (quod she) that are they nat
For how they shal assemble euery whone
Not withstandynge I counsayle you anone
Abide you rest/ and tary you no more
It is no harme though ye be there before

So than I dressed me in myn array
And asked her whether it were wel or no
It is right wel (quod she) vnto my pay
Ye nede nat care to what place euer ye go
And whyles that she and I debated so
Lame Diligence and sawe me al my biewe
Systes (qd she) right wel broke ye your newe

Discretyon purtrayour.

Than wente we forth and met at auenture
A ponge woman/ an officer semynge
What is your name (quod I) good creature
Discretyon (quod she) without lesynge
And where (quod I) is your most abydynge
I haue (quod she) this office of purchace
These purueyours that longeth to this place

Acquayntaunce herbyger.

Fayre soue (quod I) in al your ordenaunce
What is her name that is the herbygere
Forsothe (qd she) her name is Acquayntaunce
A woman of right gracyous manere
Tha thus (qd I) what straungers haue ye here
Out fewe (quod she) of hyghe degre ne lowe
Ye be the first/ as forsoth as I knowe

Countenaunce porter.

Thus with tales we came streyght to the gate
This ponge woman departed was and gone
Lame Diligence and knocked fast therate
Who is without (qd Countenaunce) anone
Truely (quod I) fayre syster here is one
Whiche one (qd she) & there withal she lought
I Diligence/ ye knowe me wel ynought

Than opened she the gate/ and in we go
With wordes fayre she sayd ful gentyly
Ye are welcome ywys/ are ye no mo?
Nat one (quod she) saue this woman and I
Nowe than (quod she) I pray you hertely
Take my chambre for a whyle to rest
Tyl your felawes come/ I holde it best

I thanked her/ and forth we go euerychone
Tyl her chambre without wordes mo
Lame Diligence and toke her leaue anone
Where euer ye fynd (quod I) nowe may ye go
And I thanke you right hertely also
Of your labour/ for whiche god do you mede
I can no more/ but I se be your spede (de

Than Countenaunce asked me anone
Your felawshyp/ where bey they (quod she)
For sothe (qd I) they be comyng euerychone
But whyche they are I knowe no erthynge
Without I may bey at this wyndowe se
Here wyl I stande awaytynge euer amonge
For wel I wote they wyl nat be longe

Thus as I stode musynge ful busily
I thought to take good hede of her aray
Her gowne was blewe/ this wote I hertely
Of good sarcyn/ and furred wel with gray
Vpon her sleue her worde this is no nay
Whiche sayd thus/ as my penne can endyte
(A moy que ie voy) writen with letters whyte

Than forth withal she came streyght to me
Your wordes (q she) sayne wold I fayne knowe
Forsothe (quod I) ye shal wel knowe me and se
And for my worde I haue none/ this is trewe
It is ynough that my clothynge be blewe
As here before I had commaundement
And so to do/ I am right wel content

Largesse stewarde.

But tel me this I pray you hertely
The stewarde here say me/ what is her name
She hight Largesse I say you surely
A sayre lady and of right noble fame
Whan ye her se ye wyl repute the same
And vnder her to byd you welcome al
There is Drightwr marshal of the hal

Nowe al this whyle that ye here tary fyrst
Your owne matters ye may wel haue in mynde
But tel me this/ haue ye brought any dyst
Ye ye (quod I) and els I were behynde
Where is there one tel me that I may fynde
To whom I may shewe my matters playne
Surely (quod she) vnto the Chamberlayne

Remembraunce chamberlayne

The chamberlayne (quod I) say ye trewe
Ye hertely (sayd she) by myne aduyse
Be nat afrayde/ vnto her to ryde fyrst
It shal be done (quod I) as ye deuyse
But ye must knowe her name in any wyse
Truely (qd she) to shewe you in ful fourme
Without fayning her name is Remembraunce

The

The secretarye she may not yet be forget
for she doth right moche in curry thynge
Wherfore I rede/whan ye haue with her ymet
your matere hole tel her without fayntynge
ye shal her fynde ful good and ful louynge
Tell me her name (quod I) of gentylnesse
By my good sothe (quod she) Aufrenesse

That (quod I) for her is passyng good
for euery dyl and ardule she muste se
How be good (q I) some shade there as I stode
thy sela wes be comyng/ponder they be
Is it tape/or say ye sothe (quod she)
Ye tape/nay nay/I say you for certayne
Se how they come togyder twayne & twayne

Ye say ful sothe (quod she) that is no nay
I se comynge a goodly company
They ben fuche folke (quod I) dare I say
That lyft to soure/thynke it verely
And for my soure I pray you faythfully
Al any tyme/whan they vpon me cal
That ye wol be good frende to hem al

Of my frendshyp (qd she) they shal not mysse
And for their ease to put therto my payne
God yelde it you (quod I) but take you this
How we shal we know who is ꝑ chamberlayne
That shal ye wel know by her worde certayne
What is her worde syster/I pray you say
(Plus ne purroy) thus wryteth she alway

Thus as we stode togyder she and I
Euen at the gate my sela wes were echone
So met I hem (as me thought was goodly)
And bad hem welcome al by one and one
Than came forth Countenaunce anone
Ful fayrely/sayre syster al (quod she)
I se right welcome ye to this countre

I counsayle you to take a lytel rest
In my chambre/if it be your plesaunce
Whan ye be there/ me thynke it for the best
That I go my/ and cal Perseueraunce
Because she is of your acquayntaunce
And she also wyl tel you euery thynge
How ye shal be ruled of your comynge

My sela wes al and I/by one adayse
Were wel agreed/to do lyke as she sayde
Than we began to dresse vs in our gyse
ꝑ folke shulde say we were not vnpurueyde
And good wagers amonge vs there we layde
Whiche of vs was atyred most goodlest
And of vs al whiche shulde be praised best

The porter came and brought Perseueraunce
She welcomed vs in curtyse manere
Thinke ye not long (ꝙ she) of your attendaūce
I wyl go spede vnto the herbigere
That she puruey for your lodginge here
Than wyl I go vnto the chamberlayne
To spede for you/ and come anone agayne

And whan she departed was and gone
We sawe folkes comynge without the wal
So great people/that nombre coude we none
Ladyes they were/and gentylwomen al
Clothed in vse we echone her worde withal
But for to know we her worde or her deuyse
They came so thycke/ ꝑ I ne might I no wyse

With that anone came in Perseueraunce
And where I stode/she came streyght to me
Ye ben (qd she) of myne olde acquayntaunce
you to enquere the bolder wolde I be
What worde they bere echo after her degre
I you pray tel it me in secrete wyse
And I shal kepe it close on warantyse

We ben fyue ladyes (quod I) al in fere
And gentylwomen soure in compauy
Whan they begyn to open her matere
Than shal ye know we her wordes by and by
But as for me I haue none verely
And so I stode Countenaunce here before
Al myne arayn se/what nedeth more

Nowe than (quod she) I wol go agayne
That ye may haue knowlege/ what ye shulde
In soth (qd I) if ye wolde take the payne (do
Ye dyd right moche for vs/ if ye dyd so
The rather sped/the soner may we go
Great reft al way there is in tarynge
And longe to sewe it is a wery thynge

Than parted she/and came agayne anone
Ye must (quod she) come to the chamberlayne
We be no we redy (quod I) euerychone
To folowe you/whan euer ye lyst certayne
We haue none eloquence to tel you playne
Besechynge you we may be so excused
Our trewe meanynge/that it be not refused

Than wente we forth after Perseueraunce
To se the prees it was a wonder cace
There for to passe it was great combraunce
The people stode so thycke in euery place
Nowe stande ye styl (quod she) a lytel space
And for your ease somwhat I shal assay
If I can make you any better way

And forth she goth/amonge hem euerychone
Makyng a way/that we might thorugh passe
More at our ease/and whan she had so done
She beckende vs to come/where as she was
So after her we folowed more and las
She brought vs streyght vnto ỳ chãbrelayne
There leste she vs/and than she went agayne

We salued her as reason wolde it so
Ful humbly besechyng her great goodnesse
In our maters that we had for to do
That she wolde be good lady and maystresse
ye be welcome (quod she) in sothfastnesse
And se what I can do/you for to please
I am redy/that may be to your ease

We folowed her vnto the chambre dore
Systers (quod she) come ye in after me
But wete ye wel/there was a paued flore
The goodlyest/that any wight myght se
And furthermore aboute than losed we
On eche corner/and vpon euery wal
Whiche was made of Surel and Crystal

Wherin was grauen of storyes many one
Fyrst howe Phyllis/of womanly ppte
Dyed pytevously for loue of Demophone
Neyte after was the story of Tysbe
Howe she slewe her selfe vnder a tree
yet sawe I more/howe in a tryst pytone cruas
For Antony was slayne Cleopatras

That other syde was hawes the sheue
Ful vntrewly disceyued in her beyne
There was also Anneleyda the quene
Vpon Atrytt howe sore she dyd complayne
Al these storyes were grauen there certayne
And many mo/than I reherce you here
It were to longe to tel you al in fere

And bycause the walles shone so bryght
With fyne vmple they were al ouer spred
To ỳ entent sothe shulde not hurte her syght
And thorugh it the storyes myght be red
Than furthermore I went/as I was led
And there I sawe without any fayle
A chayre set/with ful ryche aparayle

And fyue stages/it was set fro the grounde
Of Cassydony ful curyously wrought
With foure pomelles of golde/& very rounde
Set w^t^ saphirs/as good as ronde be thought
That wote ye what/if it were thorugh sought
As I suppose/fro this countrey to Inde
Another suche it were right sore to synde

For wete ye wel/I was right nere that
So as I durst/beholdyng by and by
Aboue there was a riche cloth of estate
Wrought with the nedle ful stroungely
Her worde theron/and thus it sayd trewly
I endure to tel you in wordes fewe
With great letters/the better I hem knewe

Thus as we stode/a dore opened anone
A gentyl woman/semely of stature
Berynge a mace/came out her selfe alone
Sothely me thought a goodly creature
She spake nothynge to lowde/I you ensure
Nor hastely/but with goodly warnynge
Make rome (quod she) my lady is comynge

With that anon I sawe Perseueraunce
Howe she helde vp the tapet in her honde
I sawe also in right goodly ordenaunce
Thre great lady within the tapet stande
Comynge outwarde/I wol ye vnderstande
And after her a noble company
I coude nat tel the names sykerly

Alone

Of theyr names I wolde nothyng enquere
further than suche as we wolde serue vnto
Fyrst a lady/whyche was the chaunceller
Incomparable/sothely her name was so
for he nedeth with her fayre mache to do
In our matters/and alwaye more and more
And so fourthe to tel you furthermore

Of thes lady/her beaute to discryue
my conynge is to symple verely
For neuer yet the bayes of my eyne
Do vnto sayne I haue sene none trewly
In her estate assured verely
There wanted naught/I dare wel assure
That longed to a goodly creature

And furthermore to speke of her array
I shal you tel the maner of her gowne
Of clothe of golde/ful riche it is no nay
The colour vlewe of a right goodly fasyon
In taberde wyse/the sleues hangyng adowne
And what purfyl there was/& in what wyse
So as I can I shal it you deuyse

After a forte/the collar and the bande
Lyke as Argyrus made in purfelynge
With great perles ful fyne and orient
They were couched al after one worchynge
With diamondes in stede of poderynge
The sleues and purfel of assyse
They were made lyke in euery wyse

Aboute her necke a forte of fayre rubyes
In whyte flowres of right fyne enamayle
Vpon her heed set in the fayrest wyse
A cercle of great balays of entayle
That in erneste to speke without fayle
For pryce and aloe/and euery maner age
It was a worlde to loken on her vysage

Thus cumynge forthe to fyt in her estate
In her presence we fourted do lowe euerychone
Presentynge our bylles/and wote ye what
Ful humbly she toke them by one and one
When we had done/then came they al anone
And dyd the same ordre after her manere
Knelynge at ones/and vsynge al in fere

And whā this was done/& she set in her place
The chamberlayne she dyd vnto her cal
And she goodly romynge vnto her a pace
Of her entent knowyng nothyng at al
Dyde bidde the prease (qō she) vp to yͤ wal
Make large rowme/but loke ye do not tary
And take these bylles to the secretarye

The chamberlayne dyd her cōmaundement
And came agayne/as she was dyd to do
The secretarye there beyng present
The bylles were delyuered her also
Not onely ours/but many other mo
Than the lady with good aduyce agayne
Anon withal/called her chamberlayne

We wol (qō she) the first thyng that ye do
The secretarye ye do make come anon
With her bylles/and thus we wyl also
In our presence she rede hem euerychon
That we maye take good aduyce theron
Of the ladyes that ben of our counsayle
Lo this be done/without eny fayle

When the chamberlayne wyste of her entent
Anon she dyd the secretarye cal
Let your bylles (quod she) be here present
Vnto my lady it wyl: Madame (qō she) I shal
And in presence she wyl ye hem cal
With good wyl I am redy (quod she)
At her pleasure/when she cōmaundeth me

And vpon that was made an ordynaunce
They that came first her bylles shuld be redde
Ful gentilly than sayd Persewerannce
Reason it wyl they were soneste spedde
Anon withal/vpon a tapet spredde
The secretarie sayde hem do wel echone
Our bylles first she redde one by one

The first lady bearyng in her deuyse
Sans quelamays/thus wrote she on her byl
Complaynyng sore/and in ful pytous wyse
Of promesse made/with faythful hert & wyl
And so bestow ayenst al maner spyl
Without deserte/alwayes on her partye
In this matter/desyring a remedy

Her nept folowing/her word was I this wise
(Dng sanz chalenger) & thus she dyd complayne
Though she had be guerdoned for her seruyce
Yet nothynge lyke as she that toke the payne
Wherfore she coude in no wyse her restrayne
But in this case sewe vnto her pieasure
As reason wolde to haue recompence

It sayd god wote/and that ful pytously
Lyke as she was disposed in her herte
No mys/fortune that she toke greuously
Al one to her was there ioy and smerte
Somtyme no thanke for al her good deserte
Other comforte she wanted nor coueyte
And so vsed/it greued her nothynge

So furthermore/to speke of other thayne
One of hem wrote after her fantasy
(Oncques puis seuer) & for to tel you playne
Her complaynt was ful pitous verely
For as she sayd/there was great reason why
As I can remembre this matere
I shal you tel the processe al in fere

Desyrynge her/and lowly besechynge
That she wolde for her sake a better way
As she that had ben her dayes syxtynge
Sted fast and trewe/and wyl be alway
Of her sela we/ somwhat I shal you saye
Whose byl was red nexte forthe warhal
And what it ment/rehersed you I shal

Her byl was made complaynynge in her gyse
That of her ioy/her comforte and gladnesse
Was no surete/ for in no maner wyse
She sayd therin no poynt of stablenesse
No we pl no we wele/ out of al sykernesse
Ful humbly desyrynge of her high grace
Soone to shewe her remedy in this cace

(En diu esk) she wrote in her deuyse
And thus she sayd withouten fayle
Her trouthe myght be take in no wyse
Lyke as she thought/wherfore she had meruaile
For trouth somtyme was wont to take auayle
In euery matere/but al that is ago
The more pyte that it is suffred so

Her sela we made her byl/and thus she sayde
In playnynge wise there as she loued best
Whether she were wrothe or wele apayde
She might nat se what she wolde sayne fest
And wrothe she was in very ernest
To tel her worde/as ferforth as I wote
(Entierment vostre) right thus she wrote

Moche more there was/ wherof she shulde cho
But she thought it to great encombraunce (playn
So moche to wryte/& therfore in certayn
In god and her she put al her affiaunce
As in her worde is made a remembraunce
Beseching her/that she wolde in this case
Shewe vnto her the fauour of her grace

And vpon that she made a great requeste
With herte and wyl/& al that might be done
As vnto her that might redresse it beste
For in her mynde there might she finde it sone
The remedy of that whiche was her boone
Rehersynge that she had sayd before
Beseechynge her it might be so no more

The thirde she wrote rehersing her greuaunce
yet/wote ye what/a pitous thinge to here
For as me thought she felte great displesaunce
One might right wel perceyue it by her chere
And no wonder/ it sate her possynge nere
yet lothe she was to put it in wryttynge
But nede wol haue course in euery thinge

And in lyke wise as they had done before
The gentyl women of our company
Put her byllet/and for to tel you more
One of hem wrote (ceste sanz dire) verily
And her matere hole to specify
With in her byl she put it in writinge
And what it sayd/ye shal haue knowynge

(Sopes ensuite) this was her worde certayne
And thus she wrote in a lytil spare
There she soured/her labour was in vayne
For he was set al in another place
Ful humbly desyrynge in that cace
Some good remforte her sorowe to appese
That she myght kyne mans herte rase

The

The fourthe surely me thought she lyked wele
As in her porte/and in her behauynge
And (very manyfest) as farre as I cowde fele
That was her worde tyl her welbeloued comynge
Wherfor to her she prayed aboue al thinge
Ful hertely to say you in substaunce
That she wolde sende her good contynuaunce

Ye haue rehersed me these bylles al
But nowe lete se somwhat of your entent
It may so hap / parauenture ye shal
Nowe I pray you whyle I am here present
Ye shal haue knowlege parde what I ment
But thus I say/in trouthe / make no fable
The case is selde so ruly lamentable

And wel I wote ye wol thinke the same
Lyke as I say/whan ye haue herde my tyl
Nowe good tel on/I hate you by sayut Iame
Abyde a whyle/it is nat yet my wyl
Yet must ye wete by reason and by skyl
Sith ye haue knowlege of ȳ was done before
And thus it is sayd without wordes more

Nothynge so lefe as dethe to come to me
For/final ende of my sorowes and payne
What shulde I more despyte as semeth ye
And ye knewe al aforne it for certayne
I wote ye wolde/and for to tel you playne
Without her helpe that hath al thinge in cure
I can not thinke that it may longe endure

As for my trouthe it hath bepowred wele
To say the sothe/I can say no more
Of ful longe tyme and suffred euery dele
In pacience/and kepe it al in store
Of her goodnesse/besechynge her therfore
That I myghte haue my thanke in suche wyse
As my deserte serueth of iustice

Whan these bylles were red euerychone
The ladyes toke a good aduysement
And hem to answere by one and one
She thought it was to moche in her entent
Wherfor she gaue hem commaundement
In her presence to come bothe one and al
To yeue hem her answere in general

What dyd she than suppose ye verely?
She spake her selfe/ and sayd in this maners
We haue wel seue your bylles by and by
And some of hem pytous for to here
We wol therfore ye knowe we al this yere
Within shorte tyme/our courte of parlyment
Here shal be holde in our palaye present

And in al this/wherin ye fynde you greued
There shal ye fynde an open remedy
In suche wyse as ye shal be releued
Of al that ye reherse here throughly
As for the date ye shal knowe verely
That ye may haue a space in your comyng
For Dyligence shal it tel you by writyng

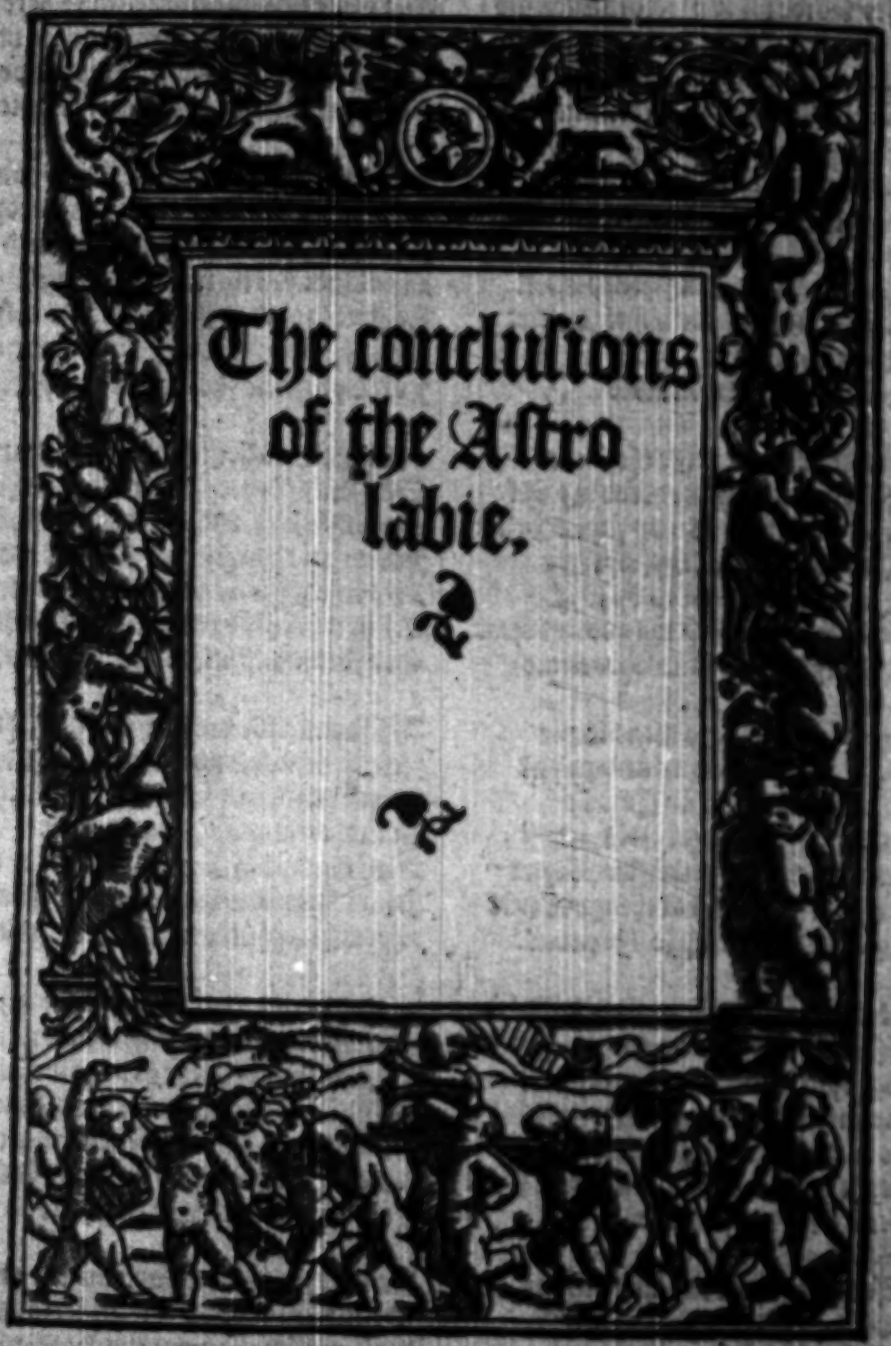
We thanked her in our moste humble wyse
Our seruyce/eche one by one assente
Submyttyng vs lowly tyl her seruyse
For as we thought/ we had our trauayle spēt
In suche wyse as we helde vs contente
Than eche of vs toke other by the sleue
And forthe withal/as we shulde take our leue

Al sodainly the water sprange anone
In my vysage/and therwithal I woke
Where am I nowe thought I/al this is gone
Al mased/and vp I gan to loke
With that anon I went and made this boke
Thus symply reherssyng the substaunce
Because it shulde not be out of remembraunce

Nowe verily your dreame is passyng good
And worthy to be had in remembraunce
For though I stande here as longe as I stode
It shulde to me be none encombraunce
I toke therin so ruly great plesaunce
But tel me nowe what ye the boke do cal
For I must write: With right good wyl ye shal

As for this boke/to say you very ryght
Of the name to tel you in certaynte
Lassemble de dames/ thus it hyght
Nowe thynke ye/that name is good parde
Nowe go farewel/for they cal after me
My felawes al/and I must after some
Rede wel my dreme/ for nowe my tale is done.

Finis.


The conclusions
of the Astro
labie.

Litel Lowys my sonne/ I perceyue wel by certayne euydences thyn abilite to lerne scyences/ tendryng nombres scientifyques: and also wel cõsydre I thy besye prayer in especial to lerne the tretyse of the Astrolabe. Than for as moche as a philosopher sayth/ he wrappeth hym in his freude/ that vndiscendeth to the rightful prayers of his freude: Therfore I haue gyuen the a sufficient Astrolabye for our orizonte/ compowned after the latytude of Oxenforde: vpon the whiche by mediacion of this lytel treatyse/ I purpose to trache the a certayne nombre of conclusions/ pertaynyng to this same instrument. I say a certayne of conclusions for thre causes/ the first cause is this. I truste wel that al the conclusions that haue be foundey/ or elles possiblye myght be founde in so noble an instrument as is the Astrolabye/ ben vnknowen perfytely to any mortal man in this regyon/ as I suppose. Another cause is this/ ỹ forthy in any tables of the Astrolabye that I haue seene/ there ben some conclusions/ that wol not in al thinges performe her bytheses: and some of hem ben to harde to thy tender age of ten yere to conceyue. This treatyse deuyded in fyue parties wyl I shewe the wonder lyght rules & naked wordes in englysshe/ for latyn ne canste thou yet but smale/ my lytel sonne. But neuer the lesse suffysyth to the these trewe conclusions in englysshe/ as wel as suffyseth to this noble clerkes grekes these same conclusions in greke/ & to arabyens in arabysshe/ and to iewes in Hebrewe/ and to ỹ latyn folke in latyn: whiche latyne folke had hem furste out of other dyuers langages/ and write hem in her owne tonge/ that is to sayne in latyne. And god wote that in al these languages and in many mo/ haue these conclusions ben sufficiently lerned and taught/ and yet by dyuers rules/ right as dyuers pathes leaden dyuers folke the right waye to Rome. Now wol I pray mekely euery person discreete/ that redeth or herith this lytel treatyse/ to haue my rude entendyng excused/ and my superfluyte of wordes/ for two causes. The furst cause is/ for that curyous endityng and harde sentences is ful heuy at ones/ for suche a child to lerne. And the seconde cause is this/ that sothly me semeth better to writen vnto a child twyse a good sentence/ than he forgette it ones. And Lowys if it so be that I shewe thee in my spech Englisshe/ as trewe conclusyons/ touchyng this matter/ and not onely as trewe/ but as many and subtyl conclusyons as ben yshewed in latyn in any comune tretyse of the Astrolabye/ conne me the more thanke/ and praye god saue the kynge/ that is lorde of this langage/ and al that hym sayth beareth/ and obeyeth euerithe in his degre/ the more and the lasse. But consydereth wel/ that I ne vsurpe not to haue founden this werke of my labour or of myne engyn/ I nam but a lewde compylatour of the labour of olde astrologiens/ and haue it translated in myn englysshe only for thy doctryne: and with this swerde shal I sleen enuy.

¶ The firste partye.

The firste partye of this treatyse shal reherce the figures and the membres of thyne Astrolabye/ vpcause that thou shalte haue the greater knowyng of thyn owne instrument.

¶ The seconde partye.

¶ The seconde partye shal teche the to werken the verye practyke of the forsayd conclusyons as forforthe and al so narowe as may be shewed in so smale an instrument portatyfe aboute. For wel wote euery astrologyen/ that smalleste fractions ne wol not be shewed in so smal an instrument/ as in subtyl tables calculed for a cause.

¶ The thirde partye.

¶ The thirde partye shal contayne dyuers tables of longitudes and latytudes of sterres/ fyxe in the Astrolabye/ And tables of the declynacions of the sonne/ and tables of the longitude of cytes and townes/ And tables as wel for the gouernaunce of the clocke/ as for to fynde the altytude meridyan/ and many an other notable conclusyon after the kalenders of the trewe clerkes frere Johñ Som. and frere N. Lenne.

¶ The fourthe partye.

¶ The fourthe partye shal be a theorike to declare ỹ meanyng of the celestyal bodyes/ with the causes/ the whiche the fourthe partie in special shal shewe in a table of the very meuyng of the moone from one to one euery day and

euery

euery signe/ after thyn almanake. Upon the whiche table there foloweth a canon/ suffycient to teache as wel in maner of worchynge in the same conclusyons/ as to knowe in our orizonte/ with whiche degre of zodiac the moone aryseth in any latytude/ and the aryschynge in any planete after his latytude fro the ecliptyke lyne. ¶ The fyfte partye.

¶ The fyfthe partie shal ben an introductorie after the statutes of our doctours/ on whiche thou maysie lerne a great parte of the general rules of theorike in astrologie. In whiche fyfthe partie thou shalt fynde tables of equacions of houses/ after the latytude of Oxenforde/ and tables of digneytees of planetes/ and other noteful thynges/ if god vouchsafe and his mother ꝑ mayden/ mo than I behete.

¶ The ryngе.

¶ Thy Astrolabye hath a ryngе to putten on thy thombe on thy right honde/ in takynge of the heyght of thynges. And take kepe/ fro hence forwarde I wol clepe the heyght of ony thing/ that is take by the rule/ the altytude without ony mo wordes. ¶ The turet.

¶ This ryngе renneth in a maner of a turet/ fastened to the moder of thyn Astrolabye/ in a roume a space that it disturbeleth not the instrument to hangen after his right ceniture. The moder of thyn Astrolabye is thikkest by the brinkes/ that is the vtmoste ryngе with degrees: and al the myddle within the ryngе shal be thynner/ to receyne the plates for dyuers clymates/ and also for the rethe/ that is shape in maner of a nette/ or elles after ꝑ webbe of a loppe. ¶ The moder.

¶ The moder of thyn Astrolabye is the thikkest plate perced with a large hole/ that receyueth in her wombe the thynne plates compowned of diuers clymates/ & thy rete shapen in maner of a nette or of a webbe of a loppe.

¶ Of the foure lynes.

¶ This moder is deuyded on the backhalfe with a lyne/ that cometh distendynge fro the ryngе dowyn to the nethereste bordure/ the whiche lyne/ fro the forsaid ryng vnto the centre of the large hole amydde/ is cleped south lyne/ or elles the lyne meridional: And the remnaunt of this lyne dowyne to the bordure is cleped the northe lyne/ or al the lyne of the mydnight.

¶ Of .iii. lynes eest/ west/ northe/ & south.

¶ Ouerthwarte thes forsayd long lyne/ there crosseth him another lyne of the same length/ fro eest to west/ of the whiche lyne/ from a lytel crosse in the bordure vnto the centure of the large hole is cleped ꝑ eest lyne/ or elles the lyne orientali: and the remenaunt of the lyne/ fro the forsayd ourital vnto the bordure/ is cleped the West lyne/ or the lyne occidental.

Nowe hastе thou here the foure quarters of thyn Astrolabye/ deuyded after the four principal plages or quarters of the firmament.

¶ Whiche is the ryght syde/ and whiche is the lyfte.

The Eest syde of the Astrolabye is cleped the right syde/ and the Weste side is cleped ꝑ lyft syde. Forget not this lytel lowe. Put the ryng of thyn Astrolabye vpon the thombe of thy ryght hande/ and than wol his right syde be towarde thy lyfte syde/ and his lyfte syde wol be towarde thy right syde. Take this rule general as wel on the backe as on the wombe syde. Vpon the ende of this Eest lyne (as I firste sayd) is ymarked a lytel crosse/ where as euermore generally is conseyued the entryngе of the Eest degre/ in the whiche the sonne aryseth.

¶ The degrees fro the Eest lyne to the Southe.

Fro the lytel crosse vp to the ende of the meridyonal lyne vnder the ryngе shalt thou fynde the bordure/ deuyded with .xxvvv. degrees/ and by thot same proporcion as euery quarter of thyn Astrolabye deuyded/ ouer the whiche degrees there ben nombres of augrym/ that deuyden thylke same degrees fro .5. to .5. as sheweth by longe strikes bytwene of the whiche longe strykes the space by twene betokeneth a myle waye/ and euery degree of thilke bordure conteyneth foure myntes/ that is to sayn/ foure myntes of an houre.

¶ Of the twelue signes/ Aries/ Taurus/ Gemini/ Cancer/ and the other.

¶ Vnder

Vnder the compas of thylke degrees ben writtyn the names of the twelue signes/as Aries/ Taurus/ Gemini/ Cancer/ Leo/ Virgo/ Libra/ Scorpius/ Sagitarius/ Capricornus/ Aquarius/and Pisces. And the nombres of the degrees of the signes ben writtyn in augrym aboue/and with longe dowsys from tyme to tyme/ benydeth from ꝑ tyme that the signe entreth vnto the laste ende. But vnderstande wel/ that these degrees of signes ben encrecche of hem consydere of .lx. mynutes/ and euery mynute of .lx. secondes/ and so forth in to smale fractions infynite/as sayth Alcabucius. And therfore knowe wel that a degre of the bordure cõtayneth .xii. mynutes/ and a degree of a signe contayneth .lx. mynutes/ and haue this in mynde.

¶ The cercle of the dayes.

Next this followeth the cercle of the dayes/ ꝑ ben sygured in maner of the degrees/that cõtayne in nombre .CCCLxv. benyded also with longe strikes from .v. to .v. and the nombres of augrym writtyn vnder the cercle. ¶ The cercle of the .xii. monthes.

Next the cercle of dayes folowith the cercle of the .xii. names of the monthes/ that is to say/ Januarius/ Februarius/ Martius/ Aprill/ Maius/ Junius/ Julius/ Augusti/ September/ October/ Nouember/ December. The names of these monthes taken her names/ some for properties and some by statutes of emperours/ and some by other lordes of Rome. Eke of these monthes/ as sped to Julius Cesar and Cesar Augustus/ foure were prompowned of hyers nombres of dayes/as July & August. Then hath Januarius .xxxi. dayes/ Februarius .xxviii. Martius .xxxi. Aprill .xxx. May .xxxi. Junius .xxx. August .xxxi. September .xxx. October .xxxi. Nouember .xxx. December .xxxi. Natheles/ al though ꝑ Julius Cesar stode two dayes out of Februyer and put hem in the monthe of July/ and Augustus Cesar clepyd the moneth of August after his name/ & benyded it of .xxxi. dayes/ yet trust wel that the somme dyuideth therfore neuer the more ne the lasse in eny signe thorgh out.

¶ The names of the holy dayes.

Than folowith the names of ꝑ holy dayes in the bordure/and nexte hem the letters/ A/ B/ C/ on whiche they fallen.

¶ The scale of the Astrolabye.

Next the forsayd cercle of the A/ B/ C/ vnder the crosse lyne is marked the scale/ in maner of two squieres/ or ells in maner of ledders that fermeth vp his .xxii. poyntes/ and his dyuysions of ful many a subtel conclusyon of this forsayd scale: For the crosse lyne vnto the very angle/is cleped Umbra recta/or ells Umbra extensa/ & the neyther party Umbra versa.

¶ The rule.

Than haste thou a brode rule that hath on euery ende a square plate/parted with certayn holes/ some more & some lesse/ to receyuen the stremes of the sonne by day/ and eke by nyght/ to knowe the altytude of the sterres by nyght.

¶ The pyn/ whiche is ymagyned to be pole artyke and the horse.

Than is there a large pyn in maner of an eyelet/ that gothe thorowe the hole that halte the tables of the clymathes in the reethe/ in the wombe of the moder/ thorowe whiche pynne there gothe a tytel wegde/ the whiche is cleped the horse/ that strayneth al these partes togyther. This forsayd great pynne in maner of an eyelet/ is ymagynde to be the pole artyke in thyn Astrolabye.

¶ For lynes on the wombe syde.

The wombe syde of thyn Astrolaby is also benyded with a longe crosse in four quarters from Est to West/ from South to North/ from rist syde to lyfte syde/as is the backsyde.

¶ The degrees of the wombe syde.

The border of the whiche wombe syde is benyded fro the poynte of the Est lyne vnto the poynte of the South lyne vnder the tynge in lxxxx. degrees/and by the same proporcion is euery quarter benyded/as is the backsyde/that amounteth .CCC.lx. degrees. And vnderstande wel that the degrees of this border ben answerynge and consentynge to the degrees of equynoctial that is benyded in the same nombre/ as euery other cercle is in the lyke wyse.

Thus

This border is deuyded also with .xxiii. letters/ and a smale crosse aboue the south lyne/ that sheweth the .xxiii. houres equales of the clocke. And I haue sayde .v. of these degrees maken a myle way/ and .iii. myle way maken an houre/ and euery degre of this border contepneth .iii. mynutes/ and euery mynute .lx. secondes. Nowe haue I tolde the twyse and for the more declaracion.

¶ Of the three principal cercles.

The plate vnder the rete is discryued with three cercles/ of whiche the lefte is cleped the cercle of Cancer/ bycause þ the herd of Cancer turneth euermore cõcentrike vpon the same cercle. In this halfe of Cancer is the grettest deckynacion northwarde of the sonne/ and therfore is he cleped Solstitium of sõmer/ which declinacion after þ Ptholome/ is .xxiii. degrees and .l. mynutes/ as wel in Cancer as in Capricorne. This signe of Cancer is cleped the troppike of sõmer of tropos/ that is to sayne ayenwarde. The myddle cercle in wydnesse of this .iii. is cleped the cercle equinoctial/ vpon whiche turneth euer more the herdes of Aries and Libra. And vnderstande wel/ that euermore this cercle equinoctial turneth iustly fro bery Est to bery West/ as I haue shewed in the sphere solide. This same cercle is cleped also the wayer of the day. for whan the sonne is in the hedde of Aries and Libra/ than bey dayes and nyghtes lyke of lengthe in al the worlde/ & therfore bey these two signes called equinoctis. And al that moueth within these heedes of Aries and Libra/ is yealled northwarde/ and al that moueth without these heedes/ his meuyng is cleped southwarde/ as for the equinoctyal/ take kepe of the latytudes Northe & Southe/ and forget it not: By this cercle equinoctial bey consydred the .xxiii. houres of the clocke. for euermore the aryssyng of .xv. degrees of the equinoctial maketh an houre equale of the clocke. This equinoctial is cleped the mydway of the first meuynge/ or ells of the sonne. And note that the fyrste meuyng is cleped meuynge of the first mouable of the eight sphere/ which meuyng is fro Est to West/ & agayne in to Est. Also it is cleped gyrdel of the first meuyng. for it departeth the first mouable/ that is to sayne/ þ sphere in two lyke partyes euen distante fro the poles of this worlde. The wydest of these three cercles principal is cleped the cercle of Capricorne/ & turneth euermore concentrike vpon the same cercle. In the herd of this forsayd Capricorne is the greatest deckynacion southewarde of the sonne. and therfore it is cleped Solstitium of wynter. This signe of Capricorne is also cleped the troppike of wynter. for than begynneth the sonne to come agayne to ward.

¶ Of the almicanteras/ the signet/ and what is thyn ozizonte.

Upon this forsayd plate bey compased certayne cercles/ that hyghten almicanteras: of whiche some of hem semen parfyte cercles/ and some semen imparfyte. The creature that stondeth a myddes the nar towest cercle is cleped the signet. And the nexterest cercle/ that deuydeth the two emysperies that is the partie of the heuen aboue the erthe/ and the partie vnethe. These almicanteras bey compowned by two and two/ al be it so that on dyuers astrolabies some almycanteras bey deuyded by one/ & some by two/ and some by thre/ after the quantyte of the Astrolabye. This forsayd signet is ymagyned to be the very poynt ouer the crowne of thy herd. and also this signet is the very pole of the ozizonte in euery regyon.

¶ What bey thyn azimutes.

From this syguet (as it semeth) there comen croked strykes/ lyke to the clawes of a loppe/ or ells lyke to the werke of a womans calle/ in beruyng ouerth warte the almycanteras/ and these same strykes or diuysions bey cleped Azimutes/ and they deuyden the ozizontes of thyn Astrolabye in .xxiii. diuysions. And these azimutes serue to knowe the rysies of the synamont/ and to other conclusyons/ as for to knowe the signet of the sonne & of euery sterre.

¶ Of the .xii. houres of the planettes.

Nexte thyse azymutes/ vnder the cercle of Cancer/ bey the .xii. diuysions emboliste/ moche like to the shap of the azymutes that shewen the spaces of houres of planettes.

¶ Thy

¶ The rete or elles the zodiake.

The rete of thyn Astrolabye whiche is thy zodiake shapen in maner of a net or of a loppe webbe/ after the olde description/ whiche thou mayste turne vp and downe as thy selfe lyketh/ conteyneth certayne number of fixtres fyxe/ with her longitudes and latytudes determinate/ yf so be that they haue not ceased. The names of the fixtres ben written in the margyn of thy rete there they sytte/ of the whiche fixtres the smale poynt is cleped the centure. And vnderstond/ that al the fixtres sittyng within the zodiake of thyn astrolabye/ ben cleped fixtres of the northe/ for they aryse by the northe est syne/ and al the remenant fyxes out of the zodiake/ ben cleped fixtres of the southe/ but I saye not that they aryse al by the south est syne/ witnesse of Alcabetan and also Algomysa. Generalip vnderstande this rule/ that thilke fixtres that ben cleped fixtres of the northe/ arysen rather than the degree of her longitude/ and al the fixtres of the southe/ arysen after the degree of her longitude/ that is to sayne/ fixtres in thyn astrolabye. The measure of longytude of fixtres ystaken in the syne ecliptyke of heuen/ vnder the whiche syne whan that the sonne and the moone ben syne right/ than the superficie of this syne/ than is the eclypse of the sonne or of the moone/ as I shal declare yf ever the cause why: but sothly the ecliptyke syne of thy zodyake is the vttereste bordure of the zodiake there thy degrees ben marked. The zodyake of thy astrolabye is shapen as a compace/ whiche that conteyneth a large brede/ as after the quantyte of thy astrolabye/ in ensample that the zodyake of heuen is ymagyned to be a superficies/ conteyneng the latytude of 12 signes/ where as al the remenaunt of circles in heuen ben ymagyned bery fynes without any latytude. Semblably the celestyal zodiake is ymagyned a syne/ whiche that is cleped the ecliptyke syne/ vnder the whiche syne is euermore the way of the sonne. Thus ben there 6 degrees of the zodiake of that oute syde of the syne/ and 6 degrees on that other. The zodiake is deuyded in 12 principal deuysyons/ that departen the 12 signes/ and for the straytnesse of thyn astrolabye/ than is euery smale deuysion in a sygne ypyrd by two degrees and two/ I meane degrees conteynyng 60 mynutes/ and this forsayd heuenlyssh zodiake is cleped the cercle of the signes/ or the cercle of bestes. For zodiake in langage of grese soweneth bestes in latyn longes and in the zodiak ben the 12 signes that haue names of bestes/ bycause whan the sonne entreth in any of the signes/ he taketh the proprete of suche bestes/ or elles for that the fixtres ben there ben syped ben disposed in signe of bestes or shape lyke bestes/ or elles whan the planettes ben vnder the signes they transmute vs by her influences/ operacions/ and effectes/ lyke to operations of bestes. And vnderstande also/ that whan an hote planet cometh in to an hote signe/ than entreth his hete/ and if a planet be calde/ than amenuseth his coldenesse/ bycause of the hotte sygne. And by this conclusyon mayst thou taken ensample in al signes/ be they moyste or drie/ mouable or fyxe/ restreynyng the qualyte of the planettes as I firste sayd. And euerych of these 12 signes hath respecte to a certayne parcel of the body of a man/ and hath it in gouernaūce: as Aries hath thyn heed/ & Taurus thy necke and thy throte/ Gemini thyn arme holes and thyn armes/ and so forthe/ as shal be shewed more plainly in the fifth partie of this tretyse. The zodiake the whiche is partie of the eyght sphere/ ouerberueth the equinoctial/ and he ouerberueth him agayne in euery partes/ and that one halfe declyneth southwarde/ and that other northwarde/ as playnly declareth the tretyse of the sphere.

¶ The label.

Than hast thou a label that is shapen lyke a rule/ saue that it is streight and hath no platen on eyther ende/ but with the smale poynte of the forsaid label shalt thou calcule the equacions in the bordure of thyn astrolabye as by thyn almury.

¶ The almury/ the dentycle of Capricorne/ or elles the calculere.

Thyn almury is cleped the dentycle of Capricorne/ or elles the calculere/ this same almury set fyxe in the heed of Capricorne/ & it streyneth

of many a nedfull conclusyon in equacion of thynges/as shal be shewed.

¶ Here begynneth the conclusyons of thys Astrolabye to synde the degre in the whiche the sonne is day by day/ after his course aboute.

Seeke and knowe whiche is the daye of the moneth / and lay thy rule vpon the same daye/and than wol the very poynte of thy rule verily sytten on the bordure vpon the degre of the sonne. Ensample as thus. The yere of our lorde 1391 the 12 daye of Marche at myddaye/I wolde knowe the degre of the sonne/I sought in the backhalfe of myn Astrolabye/and founde the cercle of the dayes the whiche I knew by the names of the monthes written vnder the same cercle: tho layde I my rule ouer the forsayd day/ and founde the poynte of my rule in the border vpon the first degree of Aries/a lytel within the degree: and thus knewe I this conclusyon. Another day I wolde knowe the degree of my sonne/ and this was at myddaye in the 13 day of Decembre/ I founde the daye of the moneth in maner as I sayd: tho layde I my rule vpon the forsayd 13 day/and founde the poynte of my rule vpon the first degree of Capricorne/ a lytel within ♑ degre/ and than had I of this conclusyon the very experience.

¶ To knowe the altytude of the sonne eyther of celestyal bodyes.

Put the ryngе of thyn Astrolaby vpon thy right thombe/and tourne thy fyste fyde agayne the lyght of the sonne/ and remeue thy rule vp and downe tyl the streame of the sonne shyne thorowe bothe holes of the rule: Lose than howe many degrees this rule is arrysed fro the lytel crosse vpon the est lyne/ and take there the altytude of thy sonne: and in this same wyse mayste thou knowe by night the altytude of the moone/or of ♑ bright sterres. This chapiter is so general ouer in one that there needeth no more declaration/but forgette it not.

¶ To knowe the degree of the sonne and of thy zodiake/by the dayes in the backfyde of thyn Astrolaby.

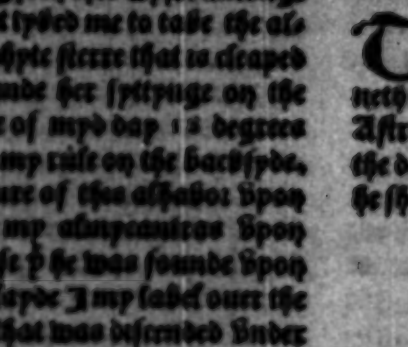
Hay if thou wylte wete the reknynge to knowe whiche is the daye in thy calender of the moneth that thou entrest in/ lay thyn Astrolaby/ that is to say the almykantha / vpon the daye in the calender of thyn Astrolabye/ and he shal shewe the thy degree of the sonne.

¶ To knowe euery tyme of the day by nyght of the sonne/and euery tyme of the nyght by the sterres fyre/and eke to knowe by night or by day the gree of the signe ♑ ascendeth on the est orizont/ whiche is cleped comenly ascendent.

Take the altytude of ☉ sonne whan the lyst/as I haue sayd/ and set the degre of the sonne (in case that it be before the myddle of the daye) amonge thyn almycanteras on the est syde of thyn astrolabye: and if it be after the myddle of the day/set the degre of the sonne vpon the weste syde. Take this maner of settynge for a general rule ones for euer. And whan thou haste sette the degre of the sonne vpon as many almycanteras of heyght as was the sonne/ taken by thy rule/ lay ouer thy label vpon ♑ degre of the sonne/ and than wol the poynte of the label sytten in the bordure vpon the very tyde of the day. Ensample of this. The yere of our lorde 1391 the 12 day of Marche/I wolde knowe the tyde of the day/I take the altytude of my sonne/ and founde that it was 25 degrees/ and 30 mynutes of heyght of ☉ bordure in the backe/ tho turned I myn astrolaby/ because it was before myddaye I turned my rule/ and set the degree of the sonne/ that is to say/the first degre of Aries in the right syde in myne astrolabye/ vpon the 25 degree 30 mynutes of heyght amonge my almycanteras: Tho layde I my label vpon the degree of my sonne/ and founde the poynte of my label in the bordure

on the

in the capitale letter/that is cleped in F. Tho rekende I al the capital letters fro the lyne of myddaught vnto the forsayd letter F/ and founde it was 9 of the clocke of the day. Tho loked I ouer my erst ouzont and founde there the 12 degre of Gemmus ascendyng/which that I toke for myn ascendent/ and in this wyse fond I the eppartynes for euermore in whiche maner I shulde knowe the tyde of the daye/ and eke myn ascendent. Tho wolde I wete that same nyght folowyng the hourr of the nyght/and wrought in this wyse: amonge my scapes of sterres it lyked me to take the altitude of the fayre whyte sterre that is cleaped the Alhabor/and founde her sittynge on the weste syde of the lyne of myd day 18 degrees of heyght/ taken by my rule on the backsyde. Tho sette I the centure of the alhabor vpon 18 degrees amonge my almycantras vpon the weste syde/because þ he was founde vpon the weste syde: Tho layde I my label ouer the degree of the sonne/ that was discended vnder the weste ouzonte/ and rekened al the letters capitalles fro the lyne of myddaye vnto the poynt of my label in the bordure/and founde that it was after noone/passed 7 of the clocke the space of 11 degrees. Tho loked I downe vpon my erst ouzonte/ and founde there 20 degrees of Libra ascendynge/ whom I toke for myn ascendent/ and thus lerned once for euer/to knowe in whiche maner I shulde come to the hourr of the nyght and to myn ascendent/ as verily as maye be taken by so smale an instrument. But natheleſſe this rule in general wyse I warne the for euer: Ne make thou neuer none ascendent at noone of the day. Take a iuste ascendent of thyn Astrolabye/ and haue sette iustly a clocke/ whan any celestyal body/ by the which thou wenest gouerne thyselfe thynges/ ben nye the southe lyne: for trust wel/ whan the sonne is nere the meridonal lyne/ the degree of the sonne remeueth so longe concentryske vpon thyn almycantras/ that sothely thou shalte erre fro the iuste ascendent. The same conclusyon say I by my centure of my sterre fyxe by the nyght/ and moreouer by eppartynes I wote wel that fro my ouzont fro midday of the clocke vnto one in tabyng of the iuste ascendent in a portatyfe astrolabye/it is to harde to knowe/ I meane from midnyght of the clocke before noone/ fyft one of the clocke nexte folowyng: and for the more declaracion lo here thy fygure nexte after this rule that folowyth.



¶ To knowe the degre of the sonne in thy zodiake by the dayes in the backsyde of thyn Astrolabye.

Than thou woste wete to rekken and knowe whiche is the daye of the moneth that thou arte in/ and lay the rule of thy Astrolabye/that is to say the alidatha vpon the day in the calender of thyn astrolabye/and he shal shewe the thy degre of the sonne.

¶ Special declaracion of the ascendent.

The ascendent sothly/is as wel in al natyuites as in questyons/and as in elections of tymes is a thing /which that these astrologiens greatly obserue/wherfore me semeth conuenyent/sens I spekke of the ascendent/to make of it a special declaracion. The ascendent sothly to take it at the largeſt/ is thylke degree that ascendeth at any of these forsayde tymes on the erst ouzont: and therfore/if that any planet ascende at thylke same tyme in the forsaid same gre of his longitude/ men say that thilke planette is in horoscopo/ but sothly the house of that ascendent/ that is to say/the first house or þ erst angle/is a thing more brode and large/for after the statutes of astrologiens/ what celestyal body that is 5 degrees aboute thilke degre that ascendeth on the ouzont/or within that nombre/that is to sayn nere the degree that ascendeth/ yet rekken they thilke planette in the ascendent/ and what planet that is vnder thilke degree that ascendeth the space of 15 degrees / yet sayne they that planette is lyke to him that is the hourr of the ascendent. But sothely if he passe the bounden of the forsayde spaces aboute as sayd/ they sayne that thilke planette is sodeyne/ and

fro the ascendent: yet sayne these astrologiens that the ascendent and eke the lorde of the ascendent/ may be shapen for to be fortunate or infortunate: as thus. A fortunate ascendent clepen they whan that no wycked planette of Saturne or Mars/or eke the tayle of the dragon is in the house of the ascendet/ ne that no wicked planette haue no aspecte of enemyte vpon the ascendent: but they wol caste that they haue fortunate planette in her ascendent/ and yet in his seknesse/ and than say they that it is wel. Furthermore they sayne that fortune of an ascendent is the contrarye of these forsayd thynges. The lorde of the ascendent sayne they/ that he is fortunate whan he is in good place for the ascendent/ and eke the lorde of the ascendent is in an angle or in a succedent where he is in his dignyte/ and comforted with frendely aspectes receyued/ and eke that he may sene the ascendent not retrograde ne combuste/ ne ioyned with no fixe we in the same signe/ ne that he be not in his descencyon/ ne resysted with no planette in his descensions/ ne haue vpon him none aspecte infortunate/ and than they sayne that he is wel. Natheless these ben obseruaunces of iudycial mater and rytes of paynyms/ in whiche my sprite hath no sayth ne knowynge of her horuscopum/ for they sayne that euery sygne is departed in 3 euen partes/ by 10 degrees and the fyfte porcion they clepen a face. And althoughe a planette haue a latytude fro the ecliptyke/yet sayn some folke/ so that the planette aryse in that same signe/ with any degre of the forsayd face/ in whiche his longytude is reckened. And yet is the planette in horoscopo be in natyuitees or in election.

¶ To knowe the very equacion of the degrees of the sonne/if it so be that it sal be thyne to almycanteras.

HOr as moche as the almycanteras of thyn Astrolabye ben compouned by two and two/ wher as some almycanteras in sondrye astrolabyes ben compouned by one or eke by two/ it is necessarye to thy lernyng/ to teche the first to knowe and wyche with thyn instrument: wherfor whan that the degre of the sonne falleth betwene two almycanteras/ or eke if thyne almycanteras ben graued with ouer great a poynt of a compace/ for bothe these thynges maye cause errour as wel in knowyng of the tyde of the day as of the very ascendent. Thou mayst werken in this wyse: sette the degree of the sonne vpon the hyghest almycanteras as of bothe/ and wayte wel where thy almury touchyth the bordure/ and sette there a pucke of pese/ sette adowne agayne the degree of the sonne vpon the nether almycanteras of bothe/and sette there a nother pese: remeue than thy almury in the bordure euen a mydde bothe peses/and thus wol leaden inwith the degre of the sonne to sytte bytwene bothe the almycanteras in his right place. Laye than the label on the degre of the sonne/ and synde in the bordure the very tyde of the day or of the nyght. And also verrily shalt thou synde vpon thy erst ouzoute thyn ascendent.

¶ To knowe the springe of the dawnyng and the ende of the euenyng/the whiche ben cleped the two crepuscules.

SEtte the nadyr of thy sonne vpon 18 degrees of heyght amonge thyn almycanteras on the weste syde/ and laye thy label on the degree of the sonne/ and than shal the poynte of the label shewe the springe of the daye: also sette the nadyr of the sonne vpon the 18 degrees of heyght amonge thyn almycanteras on the erst syde/ and lay ouer thy label vpon the degre of the sonne/ and with the poynte of thy label synde in the bordure the ende of thyn euenynge that is very nyght. The nadyr of the sonne is alle degrees that is oppositte to ꝑ degre of the sonne in the ꝑ signe/ as thus. Euery degree of Aries hyalder/is nadyr to euery degree of Libra hyalder/ and Taurus to Scorpion/ Gemini to Sagittarius/ Cancer to Capricorne/ Leo to Aquary/ Virgo to Pisces. And if any degree in thy zodyake be derke/ the nadyr shal be clere fyne.

¶ To

¶ To knowe the arche of the daye/ that some folke callen the day artificiall/ to the sonne arysing tyll it go downe.

Set the degre of the sonne upon thy Est ouzonte/ and lay thy label on the degre of the sonne/ and at the poynte of thy label in the bordure sette a pricke: turne than thy rete aboute/ tyll the degre of the sonne sytte upon the West ouzonte/ and laye the label upon the same degree of the sonne/ and at the poynte of the label sette another pricke. Nexte than the quantyte of tyme in the bordure betwyxte bothe prickes/ and take there thyne arche of thy day: the remenaunt of the bordure under the ouzonte/ is the arche of the nyght. Thus mayste thou reken bothe arches of euery portion where that thou lyste/ and by this manner of wertyng mayste thou se howe longe that any sterre syte dwelleth about the erthe/ fro the tyme that he ryseth tyll he go to reste. But the dayes nature/ that is to sayne .12. houres/ is the revolucion of the equinoctiall/ with as moche parte of the zodyake/ as the sonne of his proper mouynge passeth in the meane whyle.

¶ To turne the houres mequalles/ and the houres equalles.

Knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres inequales/ & departe hem up. 15. and take there thyn houres equales.

¶ To knowe the quantyte of the day vulgare/ that is to saye/ fro spryng of the day vnto the very nyght.

Knowe thy quantyte of thyn ascensiones/ as I haue it taught in the chapyter before/ and adde hem to the arche of the day artificiall/ and take there thy space of al ỹ hole day vulgare vnto the very nyght. By the same maner mayste thou werke to knowe the vulgare nyght.

¶ To knowe the houres inequales by daye.

Vnderstande wel that these houres inequales ben cleped houres of the planettes: and vnderstonde wel that some tyme ben they longer by daye than they be by nyght/ and somtyme contrarye. But vnderstonde thou wel/ that euermore generally the houres mequale of the daye/ with the houres mequale of the nyght/ conteyneth .30. degrees of the bordure/ the whyche bordure is euermore answerynge to the degrees of the equinoctial/ wherfore departe the arche of the daye artificyal in .12. and take there the quantyte of the houre mequale by daye/ and if thou abate the quantyte of the houre mequale by daye out of .360. degrees/ than shal the remenaunt that scaleth perfourme the hour mequale by nyght.

¶ To knowe the quantyte of houres equales.

The quantytes of houres equales/ that is to sayne the houres of the clocke/ ben departed by .15. degrees al redy in the bordure of thy Astrolabye/ as wel by nyght as by daye generally for euermore. What nedeth any more declaracyon: wherfore whan the lyste to knowe howe many houres of the clocke ben passed/ or any parte of any of these houres ben to comen fro suche a tyme to suche a tyme/ by daye or by nyght/ knowe the degre of thy sonne/ and laye thy label on it: than turne thy rete aboute ioyntly with thy label/ and with the poynt of it reken in the bordure fro the sonne arysing in to ỹ same place there thou desyrest by day as by nyght. This conclusyon wol I declare in the fourthe partye of the laste chapytre of this treatyse/ so openly that there shal lacke no worde that nedeth declaracyon.

¶ Specyal declaracion of the houres of the planettes.

Vnderstande wel that euermore fro the arysing of the sonne tyll it go to reste/ the nadyr of the sonne shal shewe the hour of the planet/ and fro that tyme forwarde al the nyght tyll the sonne aryse/ than shal the very degre of the sonne shewe the houre of the planet. Ensample as thus, The 12 day of Marche sel vpon

a saturday paraunture/ and at the ryssynge of the sonne I sounde the seconde degre of Aries sytting vpon myn erst ouzonte/ al be it was but lytel. Whan sounde I the seconde degree of Libra nadyr of my sonne/ discendynge on my weste ouzont/ vpon whiche weste ouzont euery day generally at the sonne aryssyng entreth the hour of any planet/ vnder the forsaid weste ouzonte/ after the whiche planet the day beareth his name/ & endeth in the next strybe of the planet/ vnder the forsayd weste ouzont: and euer as the sonne clymbeth vpper and vpper/ so gothe his nadyr downer & downer/ & echyng fro suche strikes ꝑ houre of planettes by order as they sytten in heuen. The firste hour inequal of euery saturday is Saturne/ and the seconde to Jupiter/ the thirde to Mars the fourth to the sõne/ the fyfth to Venus/ the syxt to Mercurius/ the seuenth to the moone/ and than apen ꝑ eyght to Saturne/ the nynth to Jupiter/ the tenth to Mars/ the enleuenth to the sonne/ the twelfth to Venus. And nowe is my sõne goy to rest as for that saterday/ than shewth the very degre of the sonne the houre of Mercury/ entryng vnder my weste ouzont at euen. And nexte him succedeth the moone/ and so forthe by order planet after planette/ in houre after houre al the nyght longe tyl the sonne aryse. Nowe rysseth the sonne the sonday by the morowe/ & the nadyr of the sonne vpon the west ouzont/ shewth me ꝑ entrynge of the hour of the forsayd sonne. And in this maner succedeth planet vnder planet fro Saturne vnto the moone/ and fro the moone vp agayne to Saturne hour after hour generally: and thus knowe I this conclusyon.

¶ To knowe with whiche degree of the zodyake any sterre fyxe in thyn astrolabye aryseth vpon the East ouzonte/ although the ouzonte be in an other signe.

Sette the centure of the sterre vpon the erst ouzonte/ and lose what degree of any signe that sytteth vpon the same ouzonte at the same tyme: and vnderstonde wel/ that with the same degre aryseth the same sterre. And this universalone aryssynge with a strongē degree in another signe/ is bycause that the latytude of the sterre fyxe is eyther North or South fro the equinoctial. But sothly the latytudes of planettes ben comenly mesured fro the ecliptyke/ bycause that none of hem declyneth but fewe degrees out fro the berde of the zodiake. And take good kepe of this chapiter of aryssyng of celestyal bodyes/ for there trusteth wel/ that neyther moone neyther sterre in our ambolyse ouzonte/ that aryseth with the same degre of his longitude/ same in one case/ and that is whan they haue no longitude fro the ecliptyke lyne. But neuer the lesse somtyme is contrarye of these planetes vnder the same lyne.

To knowe the declynacion of any degre in the zodiake/ fro the equinoctial cercle.

Sette the degree of any signe vpon the lyne meridyonal/ and reken his altytude in the almycantras fro the East ouzonte vp to the same degree set in the forsayd lyne/ and sette there a purse: Turne vp than thy rete and set the heed of Aryes or Libra in the same meridyonal lyne/ and set there another purse. And whan that this is doone/ cõsyder the altytudes of hem bothe: for sothly the difference of thilke altytude is the declynacion of thylke degree fro the equinoctial. And if it so be that thilke degree be northwarde fro the equinoctial/ than is his declynacion north/ and if it be southwarde/ than is it southe.

¶ To knowe for what latytude in any regyon the almycantras in my tables ben compowned.

Reken how many degrees of almicantras in the meridyonal line/ be from ꝑ cercle equinoctial vnto the syngnet or els from the pole artike vnto the north ouzont/ & for so great a latitude or so smale a latitude/ is the table compounded.

To knowe the latytude of the sonne in the myddes of the day/ that is clepyd the altitudo meridiem.

Sette

Set the degree of thy sonne vpon ꝑ fyne meridional/ and reken howe many degrees of almucantras ben bytwyxte thyne erst ascendent/ and the degree of thy sonne/ and take them thyne altitude meridean/ that is to sayn/ the hyghest degre of the sonne as for that day. So mayste thou knowe in the same fyne the highest fyne that any starre fyx ascendeth by nyght/ this is to sayne/ that whan any starre fyx is passed the fyne meridional/ than begynneth it to descende/ and so doth the sonne.

To knowe the degree of the Sonne by the eest for a mayst couenable.

Ese busyly with thy rule/ the hyghest ☉ of the Sonne in mydden of the daye/ tourne than thyne astrolabye/ & with a pryche of pulle marke the nombre of ꝑ same altitude in the fyne meridional. Tourne than thy eest about tyl thou fynde a degree of thy zodiake accordynge with the pryche/ this is to sayn/ sittynge on the pryche/ and in soth thou shalle fynde but two degrees in al the zodiake of that condycyon. And yet thylke two degrees ben in dyuers ꝑtyes. Thā mayst thou lyghtly by the seasō of the yere knowe the sygne in whiche is the sonne.

To knowe whiche daye is lyke to other in lengthe throughe out the yere.

Vse whiche degrees ben ylyke fromme the herdys of Lancer and Capricorn/ and loke whan the Sonne is in any of thylke degrees/ than ben the dayes lyke of lengthe/ ꝑ is to sayn/ that as longe is that day in ꝑ month/ as was suche a day in suche a moneth/ there bytwix but fyue. Also if thou take two degrees naturelles in the yere ylyke farre fromme eyther poynte of the equynoctial in the oppositte partyes/ than as longe is the day artificial in that one day as in that other/ and eke the nuttarye.

This chapitre is a manere declaracyon to conclusyons that folowyth.

Vnderstande wel/ that thy zodiake is departed in to halfe erecles/ fromme the hed of Capricorne vnto ꝑ hed of Lancer/ and a ꝑtwarde fromme the hed of Lancer vnto the hed of Capricorne. The hed of Capricorne is the lowest poynt/ where as the sonne goth in Wynter/ and the hed of Lancer is the hyghest poynt/ in whiche the sonne gothe in Somer. And therfore vnderstande wel/ that any two degrees that ben ylike farre from any of these two herdes/ trust wel that thylke two degrees ben lyke declynacyon/ be it Southwarde or Northwarde/ and the dayes of hem ben lyke of lengthe/ and the nyghtes also/ & shadowes ylike/ & the altytud̄ ylike at mydday for euer.

To knowe the verey degree of any manere starre straunge after his latytude/ thoughe he be vndeterminate in thyn Astrolaby/ forthy to the trouthe thus he shal be knowen.

Take the altitude of thy starre whan he is on the Est side of the fyne meridional as nyghe as thou mayste gesse/ and take an ascendent anone ryght by some manere starre fyx which thou knowest/ and forgete not the altitude of the first starre ne thyn ascedent. And whā that this is done/ aspye diligently whan this same fyxte starre passeth any thynge to the southwest warde/ & catche hym anone ryght in the same nombre of the altitude on ꝑ West syde of this fyne meridional/ as he was caught on the Est syde/ & take a newe ascendent anone ryght by some manere fyx/ the which that thou knowest/ and forgete not thes seconde ascendent. And whan this is done/ reken than howe many degrees ben bytwyxte the first ascendent & the seconde ascendent/ and reken wel the middel degre bytwyxte bothe ascendentes/ and set thilke mydel degree vpon thyne Est ouȝont/ and than loke what degre sit vpon the fyne meridional and take there the very degre of the ecliptike/ in whiche the starre standeth for the tyme. For in the ecliptyke is the longytude of a celestyal body reken̄ed euen fro the halfe of the herd of Aries vnto the ende of Pisces/ and his latitude is reken̄ed after the quantite of his declynacyon Northe or Southe/ towarde the poles of this werlde. As thus/ if it be of ꝑ sonne or any

fyxe

fyy starre/reken his latitude or his declynacyon fro the equinoctyal cercle/ and if it be of a planete/reken than the quantyte of his latitude from the ecliptyke lyne/al be it so ꝑ from the equinoctyal may the declynacyon or the latitude of any body celestial be reuened/after ꝑ fyght North or South/and after the quantite of his declynacyon. And yet so may the latitude or the declynacyon of any body celestyal/ saue onely of the sonne/ after his fyght North or South. And after the quantite of his declynacion be reuened from the ecliptyke lyne/fro which lyne al planetes somtyme declyne/nor the or South/saue onely the forsayd sonne.

To knowe degrees of longitudes of fyxe sterres/after that they ben determynat in thyne astrolabye/ if it so be that they ben trewly set.

Set the centre of the sterre vpon the line meridional/ & take vepe of thy zodiake/ and loke what degree of any fygne syt vpon the same lyne merydyonal at the same tyme/and there the degree in whiche the sterre standeth/and with the same degre cometh the same sterre vnto ꝑ same lyne from ꝑ ouzont.

To knowe in specyal the latitude of our centre/ I meane after the altitude of Dyenforde & the hight of our pole.

Vnderstande wel that as farre is the heed of Aries or Libra in the equinoctial from our ouzont/ as is the synet from the pole artike/ & as hye as the pole artike from the oryzonte/ as the equynoctyal is ferre from the synet/ I preue it thus by the latitude of Dyenforde / vnderstande wel that the heyght of our pole artike from our North ouzont is. 51. degrees/ and. 30. mynutes/ thā is the synet from the pole artyke. 38. degrees & 30. minutes/than is the equinoctial from our synet. 51. degrees and. 30. mynutes/thā is our south ouzonte from our equynoctyal. 38. degrees/and. 30. mynutes. Vnderstāde wel this reknyng also/forget not that the synet is. 90. degrees of heyght from the ouzont/ and oure equinoctial is. 90. degrees from oure pol artike. Also this shorte rule is soth that the latytude of any planet in a regyon is the distaūce from the synet vnto the equynoctyal.

To proue the latitude of any place in a regyon by the presse of the heyght of the pole artyke in that same place.

In some wynters nyght whan the firmament is clere & thycke sterred/wayte a tyme tyl ꝑ euery sterre supe syt lyne thꝛꝛ ꝑpendiculer ouer the pole artike/ & clepe that sterre A. & wayte another sterre that syt lyne eyght vnder. A. and vnder the pol/ & clepe that sterre F. and vnderstande wel that. F. is not considered but onely to declare that. A. that syt euer on the pol. Take than anone eyght the altytude of. A. from the ouzonte & forgete it not/ set. A. and. F. go forwel tyl agaynst the dawnyng a great whyle/ and come than agayne/ and abyde tyl that. A. is euen vnder the pol vnder. F. for sothely than wyl. F. syt ouer the pol/take thā eyghones the altitude of. A. from the ouzonte/and note as wel the seconde altitude as the first altytude. And whan that this is done/reken howe many degrees ꝑ the first altitude. A. exceded his altytude / & take halfe the ilke portion that is exceded & adde it to his seconde altitude/and take there the eleuacyon of the pole/ and ebe the altitude of thy regyon. For these two ben of one nombre/ ꝑ is to sayn as many degrees as thy pol is eleuate/so moche is the latitude of thy regyon. Ensample as thus. Paraunenture the altitude of. A. in the euenyng is. 62. degrees of heyght/ than wyl the seconde altitude or the dawning be. 22. that is to sayn/lesse than. 90. that was his first altitude at euen. Take than the halfe of. 62. & adde it to. 22. that was his seconde altitude/ & than hast thou the hyght of thy pol and the latitude of thy regyon. But vnderstande wel to proue this conclusyon and many another sayre conclusyon/ thou mayst haue a plomet hangyng on a lyne hyghe than thyn heed on a perche & that lyne mote hange euen perpendiculer betwyxe the pole and thyn eye / and than shalt thou se ꝑ. A. syt euen ouer the pole and ouer F. at euen. And also if. F. syt euen ouer ꝑ pole and ouer. A. or bey.

Anothꝛ

¶ Another conclusyon to preue the heyght of the pole artyke from the ouzonte.

TAke any sterre syde that ther descendeth vnder the ouzonte in thylke regyon/and consyder his hyghest altitude and his lowest altitude from the ouzonte/ and make a nombre of these altytudes/take than and abate halfe that nombre/and take there the elevacyon of the pole artyke in that same regyon/and for the more declaracyon &c.

o 82. 51. o 20.

¶ Another conclusyon to preue the latitude of a regyon that ye bey in.

VNderstande wel that the latitude of any place in a regyon is verely the space betwyxte the synne of hem that dwellen there/and ỹ equinoctial cercle/ north or south/ takynge the measure in the meridional lyne/ as sheweth in the almicantras of thyn astrolabye/and thilke space is as moche as the pole artyke is hye in the same place from ỹ ouzont And than is the depressyon of the pole artentike beneth the ouzonte/ the same quantite of space/neyther more ne lesse/ thā if thou desyre to knowe this latitude of the regyon/ take the altitude of the Sonne in the middle of the day whan the Sonne is in the heed of Aries or of Libra/for than moueth the Sonne in the lyne equinoctyal/and abate the nombre of ỹ same Sonnes altitude out of.90.degrees/ and thā is the remenant of the nombre that seweth the altitude of the regyon/as thus. I suppose that the Sonne is thilke day at noone.15. degrees of heyght/ abate than.15. degrees out of. 90. so seweth there.15.than is.51. degrees the latytude/I say not this but for ensample/ for wel I wote the latitude of Oxenforde is certayne mynutes lesse. Nowe if it so be that the thynketh to longe a tarynge to abyde tyl that the Sonne be in the heed of Aries or of Libra/thā loke whan that the Sonne is in any other degre of the zodiake/ and consyder the degre of hire declynacion be nouth ward from the equinoctial/abate than from the Sonnes altitude at noone the nombre of hire declinacion/ & than hast thou the heyght of the heedes of Aries & Libra/as thus. Thy Sonne paraventure is in the.10.degre of Leo almoost. 56. of heyght at noone/ & his declinacion is almoost 18 degrees nouthwarde from the equinoctyal/abate than thilke.18.degrees of declinacion out of the altitude at noone/than seweth.38.degrees/so there the heed of Aries or Libra & thyn equinoctial in that regyon. Also if it so be that the Sonnes declinacion be southward from the equinoctial/adde than thilke declinacion to the altitude of the Sonne at noone/& take there the heedes of Aries and Libra & thyn equinoctial/ abate than the heyght of the equinoctial out of. 90. degrees/ & than seweth there. 38. degrees/ that is the distaunce of the regyon from the equinoctyal of any sterre syde that thou knowest & take the nether elongacyon lengthyng from the same equinoctial lyne/and werke after the maner aforesayd.

¶ Declaracyon of the ascencyon of signes as wel in cercle directe/as in oblique.

THe excellēce of the sphere solyde amonges other noble conclusyons sheweth manifest the dyuers ascencions of signes in dyuers places/ as wel in right cercles as in embolyse cercle. These auctours wryten ỹ thilke signe is cleped of ryght ascencyon/with whiche the more parte of the cercle equinoctial and the lesse parte of the zodyake ascendeth/ & thilke signe ascendeth embolyse/ with whiche the lesse of the zodiake equinoctyal & the more parte of the zodiake ascendeth/ and euer more the arche of the day and the arche of the nyght is there vnlyke longe/& the Sonne twyse euery yere passynge thrōgh the signes of her heed & 2.somers and. 2.wynters in a yere haue these foresayd people/ and the almycantras in her Astrolabye ben streyght as a lyne/ so hathe shewed in this figure. The vtilites to knowe the ascencyons of signes in the right cercle is this. Trust wel that ye mediacions of thylke ascencyons these Astrologyens by her tables and her instrumentes knowen verely the ascencion of euery degre and mynute in al the zodiake in the embolyse cercle/ as shal be shewed. And note that this foresayd ryght ouzonte ỹ is cleped

is cleped ouzonte rectum/dewydeth the equynoctial in to right angles/ and embolyse ouzonte/where as the pole is enhaunced vpon ꝑ ouzonte/ouertometh the equinoctial in embolise angles.

¶ This is the conclusyon to knowe the ascencyons of sygnes in the right cercle/that is circulus directus.

Set the heed of what sygne the lyste to knowe the ascendyng on the right cercle vpon the lyne meridional/ & wayte where thyn almurye toucheth the bordure/ & set there a pryche/ tourne than thy rete westwarde tyl the ende of the foresayd sygne/ sette vpon the meridional lyne/and estsones waite where thyn almurye toucheth ꝑ bordure/ and set there a nother pryche. Reken than the nombres of degrees in the bordure betwyxe bothe pryches/ & take than the ascencyon of the sygne in the right cercle/and thus mayst thou werke with euery porcyon of the zodyake.

¶ To knowe the ascencyons of sygnes in the embolyse cercle in euery regyon/ Imene in circulo obliquo.

Set the heed of the signes whiche as the lyst to knowe his ascencyon vpon the Est ouzonte and wayte where thyne almurye toucheth the bordure/ and set there a pryche/ tourne than thy rete vpwarde tyl the ende of the same sygne/ set vpon the Est ouzonte and wayte estsones where as thyn almury toucheth the bordure/ and set there another pryche/reken than the nombre of the degrees in the bordure betwyxe bothe pryches/ & take there the ascencyon of the sygne in ꝑ emboliste cercle. And vnderstande wel/that al the sygnes in the zodiake/from the heed of Aries vnto the ende of Virgo/ ben cleped sygnes of the North from the equinoctial/and these signes arisen betwyxe the verey Est and the verey North in our ouzonte generally for euer: and al the signes from the heed of Libra vnto the ende of Pisses/ben cleped sygnes of ꝑ south fro the equinoctyal/and these sygnes arysen euermore betwyxe the verey Est and the verey south in our ouzonte/ also euery sygne betwyxe the heed of Capricorne vnto the ende of Gemini aryseth in our ouzonte in lesse the two houres equalles/ and these same sygnes from the heed of Capricorne vnto the ende of Gemini ben called tortuous sygnes or croked sygnes/for they risen embolyse in our ouzont and these croked signes ben obedient to the signes that ben of the right ascension. These signes of right ascencyon ben fro the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of Sagittary/and these sygnes aryseth more vpryght than dothe the other and therfore they ben called southrayne sygnes and euery of hem aryseth in more space than in two houres/of which sygnes Gemini obeyeth to Cancer/and Taurus to Leo/and Aries to Virgo/Pisses to Libra/Aquarius to Scorpio/and Capricorne to Sagittary/ and thus euermore two signes that ben lyke ferre from the heed of Capricorne obeyeth euerych of hem to other.

¶ To knowe inwardly the foure quarters of the worlde/as Est/ West/ south/ & North.

Take the altitude of thy sonne whan thou lyst/ and note wel the quarter of the worlde in whiche the sonne is from the tyme by the asymutes/ tourne than thyn astrolabye and set the degree of the Sonne in the almycantras of his altytude/on thylke syde that the Sonne standeth/ as is in maner of takyng of houres/ and ley thy label on the degre of the Sonne/and reken howe many degrees of the Sonne ben betwene the lyne meridional and the poynt of thy label/ and note wel the nombres. Tourne than ageyne thyne astrolabye/and set the poynt of thy grete rule there thou taken thyn altitudes vpon as many degrees in his bordure from the meridional/as was the poynte of thy label from the lyne meridyonal on the wombe syde. Take than thyn astrolabye with bothe handes softly and slyly/and set the sonne shyne thorugh bothe holes of thy rule/ and slyly in thilke tyme ley thyne astrolabye vnder adoun vpon a playne grounde/ & than wyl the meridional lyne of thyn astrolabye be euen southe/

and

and the Eest lyne wyll be euen Eest / and the West lyne West / and the North lyne North / so that thou werke softly and curyously in ỹ cou dynge / and thou hast thus the fourr quarters of the fyrmament. &c.

¶ To knowe the altitude of planetes from ỹ way of the sonne / whether they ben nouth or south fro the way aforesayd.

LOke whan a planet is on the lyne me ridional / if that her altytude be of the same height / that is the degre of the Sonne for that day / and than is the planet in the verey way of the sonne / and hath no latitude. And if the altitude of the planette be hyer than the degre of the Sonne / than is the planet North from the way of the sygne south / a quantyte of latitude as she weth by thyne Almucantras and yf the altytude be lesse than the degre of the sonne / than is the planete south from the way of the Sonne / suche a quantyte of latytude as she weth by thyn almycantras. This is to sayne from the way of the Sone in euery place of the zodiake / for ony the more we the sonne wyll be in another degre.

¶ For to knowe the sygnet for the assyngne of the Sonne / this is to sayne / the partye of the orizonte in whiche the Sonne ariseth.

THou must fyrst consider ỹ the Sone aryseth not in the verey Eest signet / somtyme by North est and somtyme by south est / sothly the sonne aryseth euermore in the verey Eest in our orizont / but if he be in the hede of Aryes or Libra. Nowe is thyn orizont departed in. 24. partes of thy myuutes in sygnu / peacyon of. 24. partes of the worlde / though it be so that thynnere reken ỹ that partyes in. 15. Than is there no more but wayte in the whiche myuute that the sone entreth at his aryssynge / and take there the signet of the aryssynge of the sonne.

¶ The maner of dewyssyon of thyn astrolabie is thus conyuned / as in this case.

¶ Fyrst it is dewyded in fourre places principally with the lyne that cometh fro the Eest to the West / and than with another lyne that goithe fro the Southe to the Northe / than is it dewyded in smale parties of minutes / as est and est by south / where that is ỹ first minute aboue the est lyne / and so forth fro partye to partye tyl ỹ thou come agayn to the est lyne. Thus thou myght vnderstande the syguet of euery sterre in whiche partye he ariseth.

¶ To knowe in whiche partye of the firmament is the conjunction.

CONsider the tyme of the coniunctyon by the calender / as thus: howe many houres that the coniunctyon is fro myddaye of the day before / as sheweth the canon of the calender. Reken than that nombre in the boxdure of thyne astrolabye / as thou were wonte to do in knowyng of the houres of the day or of the night / and lay thy label ouer the degree of the sonne / than wyll the poynte of the label syt vpon the houre of the conjunction. Loke than in whiche minute the degree of the sonne sitteth / and in that partie of the firmament is the coniunctyon.

¶ To knowe the syguet of the altitude of the sonne.

THis is no more to say / but any tyme of the day take the altitude of the sonne / and by the minutes in whiche he ascendeth thou might se in whiche partie of the firmament he is / & in the same wyse might thou se by night of any sterr whether he syt est / West / or south or any parte bitwyxe / after the name of the minutes in whiche the sterre standeth.

¶ To know sothly the longitude of the mone or any planet that hath no latitude fro the tyme of the ecliptike lyne.

TAke the altitude of the mone / and reken thyn altitude vp amonge thyn almucantras on whiche side that the mone standeth / & set there a pricke. Take than anon ryght vpon the mones side ỹ altitude of euery sterre sype that thou knowest / and set ben cercle vpō his altitude amonge thyn almucantras there ỹ sterre is foūden / wayte than of whych degre the

the zodiake is/to whiche the pricke of the altitude of the mone/ and there take the degree in whiche the mone standeth. This conclusion is verey sothe of the sterres in thyn astrolabie/ & stadeth after the trouth. Some treatyse of the astrolabie maketh none exception whether ☽ mone haue latitude or none/nor whether spoke of the mone the altitude of the sterre be sonde. And note if the mone shewe her selfe by day/ thanne thou mayst worche the same conclusyon by the sonne as wel as by the sterre syde.

¶ This is the werchynge of the conclusyon to knowe whether any planet be directe or retrograde.

¶ Take the altitude of any sterre that is cleped a planet and note it wel/and anone right take the altitude of some sterre fyxe that thou knowest & note it wel also/ & come agayn the thirde or the fourth night neyte folowing/for than thou shalte perceyue wel the meuynge of the planet whether he meue forwarde or backwarde/& wayte wel than whan the sterre fyxe is in this same altitude ☽ she was whan thou toke her first altitude of the forsayd planet & note it wel/for trust wel if so be ☽ ☽ planet be in the right syde of the meridional lyne/ so ☽ his seconde altitude be lesse than the first altitude was/thā is ☽ planet directe/& if he be in the west syde in ☽ condycyon/than is he retrograde/ & if so be ☽ this planet be in the eest syde whan his altitude is take/so that the seconde altitude be more than his first altitude/ than is he retrograde/ and if he be in the West syde of the lyne meridional/ than is he directe but the contrary mouynge of these parties is the course of the mone/for sothly ☽ mone moueth the contrary fro eyther planettes in her eclyptyke lyne/but in none other maner.

¶ The conclusion of equacyons of houses after the astrolabye.

SEt the begynnynge of the degree that ascendeth vpon the ende of the .x. houre unequal/ than wyl the lyne of the secōde house syt vpon the lyne of mydnyght/ remeue than the degre that ascendeth/and set hym vpon the ende of the 10 houre inequall/ than wyl the begynnynge of the 9 house sytte vpon the mydnyght lyne/bringe vp agayne the same degree that ascendeth first/and set hym vpon the eest ouzont/ and than wyl the begynnynge of the 4 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. Take than the nadere of the degree that ascendeth first and set hym vpon the ende of the 2 houre unequal/and than wyl the begynnynge of the 3 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. Take than the nadere of the ascendent and set hym vpon the ende of the 4 houre unequal/ & than wyl the begynnynge of the 6 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. The begynnynge of the 7 house is nadere of the ascendent and the begynnynge of the 8 house is nadere of the seconde/ and the begynnynge of the 9 house is nadere of the 3 and the begynnyng of the 10 house is nadere of the 4 and the begynnynge of the 11 house is nadere of the 5 & the begynnyng of the 12 house is nadere of ☽ 6 house.

¶ Another maner of equacyons of houses by the astrolabye.

TAke thyne ascendent/ and than thou hast the 4 angles/ for wel thou wotest that the oppoosite is of thyn ascendent/that is to saye/ the begynnynge of the 7 house syt vpon the west ouzont/and the begynnynge of the 10 house vpon the lyne meridional/& his oppoosite vpon the lyne of mydnyght than lay thy label vpon the degre ☽ ascendeth and reken than fro the poynte of thy label al the degrees in the bordure tyl that thou come to the meridional lyne/ and departe al thilke degrees in to 3 euen partes/ and take there the euen portions of 3 other houses for to lay thy label ouer euery of these 3 partes/ and than thou might se by ☽ zodiake the begynnynge of these 3 houses fro the ascendent/ that is to say the 12 neyte aboue thyne ascendent/ and than the 11 house and the 10 house vpon the meridional lyne/as I first seyd the same wyse worche fro the ascendent be west to the lyne of mydnyght/ and thus shal thou fynde houses/ that is to saye/ the begynnynge of the seconde/ the thyrde/ and the fourth house: than is the

in the nadyre of these .xii. houses/ the begynnyng of these .xii. houses that folowith.

¶ To fynde the lyne meridyonal/to dwell fyxe in any certayne place.

Take a rounde plate of metal for wateryng the border the better/and make therupon a fayre compace a fytel within the bordure/ and by this rounde plate vpon an euen grounde/ or some euen stone/or on a euen flocke fyxe vp the grounde/ and laye it euen by a rule in the myddes of the compace/ fyxe an euen pynne or a wyre vpright/ the smaller the better/ and sette thy pynne or thy wyre by a plome rules rule vpright euen/ and let this pyn be no lenger than a quarter/of thy diameter of the compace fro the pynne/ and wayte besyly aboute .x. or .xi. of the clocke whan ye sonne shyneth/ whan the shadowe of the pynne entreth any thing within the cercle of the compace one here hede/ & make there a pucke with pynne: abyde than fyxe wayting on the sonne after one of the clocke/tyll that the shadowe of the pynne or of the wyre passe any thing out of the cercle of compace/be it neuer so fytel/ and set there a pucke. Take than a compace and mesure euen the myddle betwixe bothe puckes/ and sette there a pucke: take than a rule and drawe a fyxe euen fro the pyn vnto ye myddle pucke/ and take there the lyne meridyonal for euermore/as in the same place. And if thou drawe a crosse ouerth warte the compace inficly ouer the lyne meridyonal/ than haste thou erst and west / and perconsequens the oppositye/ that is southe and northe.

¶ Discryption of the meridyonal lyne/and of the longitudes and latytudes of cytes and townes as wel as of clymates.

This lyne meridyonal is but a maner discryption of a lyne imagyned/ ye passeth vpon the poles of the worlde/and by the signet of our hede: & it is cleped the signet/ for in what place that any man se at any tyme of the yere whan the sonne by meuyng of the firmament cometh to the meridyonal place/ than is it the verey mydday that we clepe noone/ and therfore it is cleped the lyne of myddaye. Than take ye that entremone of two cytes or of two townes/ of whych the one approcheth nerer the est than doth the other townе/trust wel that these two townes haue dyuers meridyans. Take kepe also ye the arche of the equinoctiall/ that is contayned and bounded betwene the two meridyans/is cleped the longitude of the townе. And if so be that two townes haue meridyan lyne/ or one meridyan/than is the distaunce of hem bothe lyne sarre: & in this maner they chaunge not her meridyan/but sothly they chaunge her almycanteras for the hauefynge of the pole and the distaunce of the sonne. The longitude of a clymate maye be cleaped the space of the erthe/fro the begynnyng of the first clymate/ vnto the laste ende of the same clymate/ euen dyuers ayenst the pole artyke/ thus saye some auctours. And some clerkes say/ that if men cleape the latytude of a centre the arche meridyan/ that is contayned or intercepte betwyxe the signet and the equinoctial/ than they saye that the distaunce fro the equinoctial vnto the ende of the clymate/ euen ayenst the pole artyke/is the longitude of the clymate for south.

¶ To knowe with what degre of the zodyake that any planet ascendeth on the ouisonte/ where his latytude be north or southe.

Knowe by thyn almynake the degree of the ecliptike of any signe/ in whiche that the planet is reckened for to be/ and that is cleped the degree of his longitude. And knowe also the degre of his lattitude fro ye ecliptyke/northe or southe/and by these ensamples folowynge in especial/ thou maist worch with euery signe of the zodyake. The longitude peraventure of Venus or of an other planette was of Capricorne/ & the latytude of him was northwarde degrees fro the ecliptike lyne/ than take I a subtyl compace/ and cleped the one poynte of my compace A/ & that other B/ than take I the poynt of A/and set it in ye ecliptike lyne/ and my zodiake in the degre of the longitude of herdes/ that as to say/in the hed of Capricorne/ and than set I the poynt of B/ by mesure in the same signe/by cause ye the latytude was northe/ vpon the latytude of Venus/that is to say/in the degre fro the hed of Capricorne/

and thus haue I the degrees betwyxe my two pucbes/ than layde I downe softly my compace/and set the degree of the longitude vpon the ouzont/ than toke I and waxed my label in maner of a paire of tables/ to reteyne distinctly the pucbe of my compace/than toke I this forelayd label/ and layde it fyxe ouer the degree of my longitude/ than tooke I vp my compace & the poynte of A/in the waye of my label/as I conde gesse/ouer the ecliptyke lyne in the ende of the longitude/ I sette the poynte ouer endelonge on the label/vpon the spare of the latytude inwarde and on the zodiake/ that is to saye northwarde fro the ecliptike: Than layde I downe my compace/and loked wel in the way vpon the ecliptake of A/ and F/ than turned I my rete tyl that the pucbe of F/sate vpon the ouzont: Than sawe I wel that the body of Venus in her latytude of degrees septemtrionals/ascendeth in the ende of degree fro the heed of Capricorne. And note that in this maner thou myghtest werche with any latytude septemtrional in al signes: But southly the latytude meridyonal of a planet in Capricorne may not be take/ bycause of the lytel space betwyxe the ecliptike and the bordure of the astrolabye/and sperely in al other signes it may be take. Also the degre perauenture of Iubiter or of any other planette was in the firste degree of Pisces in longitude/ and his latytude was degrees meridyonal. Than toke I the poynte of A/ and sette it in the firste degree of Pisces on the ecliptike/ than sette I the poynt downwarde of F/in the same signe/ bycause that ♃ latytude was south degrees/ that is to say/fro the heed of Pisces/ and thus haue I degrees betwixe both pucbes. Than set I the degree of the longitude vpon the orizont/than toke I my label and layde him fyxe vpon the degre of longitude/ than sette I the poynte of A/ on my label euen ouer the ecliptike lyne in the ende of the degree of the longitude/and I sette the poynte of F/endelonge on my label the spare of degrees of the latytude outwarde fro the zodiake/ that is to saye/ southwarde fro the ecliptyke towardes the bordure/ and than tourned I my rete tyl the poynte of F/ sate vpon the ouzont/ than sawe I wel that the body of Iuppiter in her latytude of degrees meridies tall/ escedeth with the degree of Pisces in horizopo. And in thys maner thou mayst wyrche with any latytude as I sayd first/ saue in Capricorne. And thou wylte plye this crafte with the aryssyng of the moone/ looke thou reckon wel the course of houre by houre/ for she dwelleth in a degree of her longitude but a lytel whyle/as thou woste wel: but neuertheles/ if thou legen wel her very meuyng by the tables/ or after her course houre by houre/thou shalte do wel ynough.

¶ Umbra recta.

If thou wylte wirche with Umbra recta/ if thou myght come to the base of the towre/ in thys maner shalte thou wirche: Take the altytude of the toure with bothe holes/so that the rule lye euen on a poynte. Ensample/as thus. I se him through the poynte of +/ than mete I the space betwyxe me and the thur/and I fynde it 20 foote/than beholde I how + is to 12/and I fynde it is the thirde parte of 12. Right so the space betwyxe the and the toure is the thirde parte of the altytude of the toure: than thilke 20 foote is the hyghest of the toure/with the addycion of thyn owne body fro thyn eye. If the rule fal on 1/ than is 5 tymes 12 the hyghest of the toure.

¶ Umbra versa.

If thou mayste not come to the base of the toure/and thou fyxe him through the mydst of 1/set there a pucbe at thy foote/than go wast the toure/ and se him through at the poynte of 2/and set there another pucbe/ than beholde how 1 hath him to 10/and thou shalte fynde that he hath him 18 fythes/ in any beholdyng/ as I haue him to 3 1/ and thou shalte fynde it 9 fythes/ and therfor the space betwyxe 1 and 2 is 6 tymes thyn altytude. And note that at the first altytude of 1 thou settest a pucbe/ and after warde when thou doest thy eye at 2/there thou settest a pucbe/then thou findest betwene 1 and 2 foote/then shalt thou fynde that 10 is the 6 parte of 20/ than is 2 foote the altytude

altytude of the toure/but if it fal vpon another poynt/as thus. If falleth on 6 at the seconde tasyng it/ whan it falleth on ✣/ than shalte thou fynde that 6 is the seconde parte of 12/ and ✣ is the thirde parte of 12 by the thirde parte/that is to say/the space betwyxe 2 purles/ twyse the heyght of the toure/ & if the differens were 3/ than wolde it be the thyrde heyght/ Et sic de singulis. Another maner worchyng by Umbra recta. If thou mayste not come vp the base of ỳ toure/ worche in this wyse: Set thy rule vpon 1 tyl thou se the altytude/ and set at thy foote a purle/and than set thy rule vpon 2/ and so do in the same maner: than loke what is the differens betwyxe 1 and 2/ and thou shalte fynde that it is one. Than mesure that space betwyxe the two purles/and that is the 12 parte of the altytude of the toure/ and so of al other.

¶ Umbra recta.

If thy rule fal vpon the 8 poynt on the right shode we/than make the figure of 8 than loke how moche space of sete is betwyxe the and the toure/ and multiply that by 12/ and whan thou haste multyplyed it by the same nombre/than deuyde it by the nombre of 8/ and kepe the resydue/ and adde therto thy heyght vnto thyn eye/to the residue/ and that shal be the very heyght of the toure. And thus mayste thou worche on the same syde from one to 12. &c. ¶ Umbra recta.

Another maner of worchyng vpon the same syde. Loke vpon what poynt thy rule falleth whan thou sest the toppe of the toure thorowe the two holes/ and than mete the space betwyxe thy sote to the base of the toure/ & right as the nombre of the poynte hath hym selfe to 12/ right so the mesure betwyxe the and the toure/ hath hym selfe to the heyght of the same toure. Ensample as thus. Set case thy rule fal vpon 8/ than is 8 two thirde partes of 12/ so is the space betwyxe two thirde partes of the toure.

¶ Umbra Versa.

Vmbra Versa by the poynte of Umbra Recta. If thy rule fal vpon 3 whan thou sest the toppe of the toure/ sette a purle there thy foote standeth/ and go nere tyl thou mayste se the same toppe at the poynt of ✣/ and set ther another purle: than mete how many foote is betwyxe the two purles/ & the heyght vppe to thyne eye/ and that shal be the heyght of the toure. And note that 3 is the ✣ parte of 12/ and ✣ is the 3 parte of 12. nowe passeth ✣ the nombre of 3 by distaunce of 1/ therfore ỳ same space with thy heyght to thyn eye/is the heyght of the toure. and if it were so that ther were two or three distaunces in the nombres/so shulde the mesure betwyxe the purles by twyse or thryse the heyght of the toure.

¶ Umbra recta.

To knowe the hyght if thou mayst not come to the base of the thyng/set thy rule vpon what poynt thou wylt/so ỳ thou maiste se the toppe of the thyng thorowe the two holes/ and make a marke there as thy foote standeth/& go nere or ferther tyl thou mayst se it thorowe another poynt/and make there another marke/ & loke what differens is betwyxe the two poyntes in the scale/and right as that differens hath hym to 12/ right so the spaces betwyxe ỳ two markes/hath hym to the heyght of the thyng. Ensample. If set the case ỳ thou sest it thorowe at the poynt of ✣/ and after at the poynt of 3/ Nowe passeth the nombre of ✣ the nombre of 3 the distaunce of 1/ and right as this differēce of one hath hym selfe to 12/right so the mesure betwyxe bothe the markes/ hath hym to the heyght of the same thyng/ puttyng therto the heyght of thy selfe to thyn eye. And thus mayst thou werke from 1 to 12. ¶ Umbra Versa.

Furthermore/if thou wylt knowe ỳ Umbra Versa by the craft of Umbra recta/ I suppose to take thyn altytude at the poynt of ✣ & makest a marke/and thā thou goest nere tyl thou haste it at the poynt of 1 and makest there another marke/than muste thou deuyde 1 ✣ by ✣/ the nombre that roucth therof shal be 3 6/ and after deuyde 1 ✣ by 3/ and ỳ nombre that roucth therof is ✣3/ than loke what differens is betwyxe 1 6 and ✣ 6/ and that shalte thou fynde 12/ and right as 12 hath hym to 12/ so the space betwyxe the two purles/hath hym to the altytude of the thyng.

¶ Here endeth the conclusyons of the Astrolabye.

The complaynt of the blacke knyght.

In May whan Flora ꝑ fresshe lusty quene
The soyle hath clad/in grene/reed/ & whyght
And Phebus gan to shede his stremes shene
Amydde the bulle/ with al the beames bryght
And Lucifer/to chace away the nyght
Ayen the morowe our orizont hath take
To bydde al louers out of her slepe awake

And hertes hewy for to recomforte
From derkyhed/ of hewy nightes sorowe
Nature bade hem ryse/and hem disporte
Ayen the goodly glad grey morowe
And hope also/with seynt Johan to borowe
Bade in dysporte of Daunger and Dispayre
For to take the holsome lusty ayre

And with a syghe I gan for to abreyde
Out of my slombre/and sodaynly vp sterte
As he (alas) that nygh for sorowe deyde
Wyth sickenesse sate ayr so nye my herte
But for to fynde socour of my smerte
Or at the leste some release of my peyne
That me so sore halte in euery veyne

I rose anon/and thought I wolde gone
In to the wodde/to here the brides synge
Whan that the myrry vapoure was agone
And clere and fayre was the morowenyng
The dewe also lyke syluer in shynyng
Vpon the leaues/as any baume swete
Apl fery Tytan with his persaunt hete

Had dried vp the lusty grene newe
Vpon the herbes in the grene mede
And that the flowres of many dyuers hewe
Vpon her stalkes gonne for to spredc
And for to sprope out her leues in brede
Agayne the sonne/ golde burned in his spere
That do wyte to hem rafte his beames clere

And by a ryuer softe I gan reserry
Of water clere/ as crystal or crystall
Tyl at the laste I founde a ryuer wery
Towarde a parke/enclosed with a wal
In compace rounde/ and by a gate smal
Who so that wolde/ frely might gone
In to this parke/walled with grene stone

And in I went to here the brides songe
Whiche on the braunches/ bothe in playn & hale
So lowde songe/that al the woode rongc
Lyke as it shulde shyuer in peces smale
And dias me thought/ that the nyghtyngale
With so great might/ her voyce gan out wrest
Right as her herte for loue wolde brest

The soyle was playn/smothe/& wonder softe
Al ouerspradde with tapettes tha Nature
Had made her selfe: couered ebe & lofte
With bowes grene/the flowres for to cure
That in her beautie they may longe endure
From al assaute of Phebus ferment fere
Whiche in his sphere so hotte shone and clere

The eyre attempre/and the swote wynde
Of zepherus/amonge the blosomes whyte
Do holsom was/and so norissyng by kynde
That smale buddes/and roundc blosmes lyte
In maner gan of her bierthe delyte
To yeue to hope there frute shal take
Ayenst Autumpne redy for to shake

I sawe the Daysyes closed vnder vmbe
Grene Aurore/and the holsome Pyne
The Eyure also/that weyeth euer of fryndc
The Lelyes fyre/vpryght on a tyne
The Eglentere eke/that to we bothe enclyne
Her bowes grene/ to the erthe adoun
Vnto her prygght called Dyanaphoun

There sawe I eke the freshe Anthemis
In whyte motley/that so swote bothe smel
Assche/fyrre/ & oke/with many a yonge braunche
And many a tree mo than I can tel
And me besyde I sawe a fyrre wel
That had his roote ryght I gan beholde
Vnder an hyll/with quycke fine wters colde

The grauel golde/the water pure as glasse
The bankes rounde/the wal enuyronyng
And softe as velure the ponge grasse
That ther vpon lustely came springyng
The sute of trees aboute compassyng
Her shadowe cast/closyng the wal roundē
And al the herbes growyng on the groundē

The water was so holsome/and so vertuous
That who myght of herbes growyng beside
Not fyue the wolde where as Narcisus
Ystayne was/thā owe vengeance of Cupyde
Where so courtely he dyd byde
The grayne of dethe vpon eche bunche
That deth more sofe we/ who that euer dunche

Ne lyke the pytte of the Pegare
Nother Permaso where poetes slepte
Nor lyke the welle of pure chastyte
Whiche ꝑ Diane with her nymphes kepte
Whan she naked in to the water lepte
That slouwe Acteon with her hondes fel
Onely for he come so nyghe the wel

But this welle that I here reherce
So holsome was/that it wolde asswage
Dolen hertes/and the venym perce
Of pensyfheed/with al the cruel rage
And ouermore refresshe the vysage
Of hem that were in any wrecchesse
Of great labour/or failen in distresse

And I that had thoo we daunger & disdayne
To dye a thirst/thought I wolde assay
To taste a draught of this welle or twayne
Myn bytter sangeur if it myght alaye
And on the banke anon downe I laye
And with myn herd/into the welle I raught
And of the water dranke I no good draught

Wherof me thought I was refresshed wele
Of the brennyng that sate so nye my herte
That verily anon I gan to fele
In huge parte released of my smerte
And ther with al anon vp I sterte
And thought I wolde walke and se more
Forthe in the parke/and in the holtes hore

And through a launde as I yede a pace
And gan aboute softe to beholde
I founde anon a delectable place
That was beset with trees yonge and olde
Whose names here for me shal not be tolde
Amydde of whiche stode an herber grene
That hecked was/ with colours newe & clene

This herber was ful of flowres gende
In to the whiche/as I beholde gan
Detwyxte an hulsere and a wodbende
As I was ware/I sawe where lay a man
In blacke/and whyte colour pale and wan
And wonder deedly asso of his hewe
Of hurtes grete/ and fresshe woundes newe

And euermore distrayned with sickenesse
Beside al this he was ful gremously
For vpon hym he had an hote accesse
That day by day hym shoke ful pytously
Do that for constraynyng of his maladye
And hertly wo/thus lyenge al alone
It was a dethe for to here hym grone

Wherof astouyed/ my fote I gan withdrawe
Greatly wondring what it myght be
That he so lay/and had no felawe
Ne that I coude no wight with hym se
Wherof I had routhe/and ese ryte
And gan anon/so softely as I coude
Amonge the busshes priuely me to shroude

If that I might in any wyse aspye
What was the cause of his deedly wo
Or why that he so pitously gan crye
On his fortune/and on vre also
With al my myght I layde an eere to
Euery worde to marke what he sayde
Out of his swough amonge as he abrayde

But first/ if I shalde make mencion
Of his person/and plainly hym discryue
He was in sothe/without exception
To speke of manhode/one the best on lyue
There may no man open trouthe stryue
For of his tyme/and of his age also
He proued was/there may shalde haue no

For one the beſt therto of bede and length
So wel ymade by good proporcion
If he had be in his beſpuer ſtrength
But thought and ſickneſſe were occaſyon
That he thus lay in lamentacion
Grufſe on the grounde/ in place deſolate
Sole by hym ſelfe/ a whaped and amate

And for me ſemeth that it is fyttyng
His wordes al to put in remembraunce
To me that herde al his complaynyng
And al the grounde of his woful chaunce
If there withal I may you do pleſaunce
I wol to you ſo as I can anone
Lyke as he ſayd/ reherce euerychone

But who ſhal helpe me nowe to complayne
Or who ſhal nowe my ſtyle gye or lede
O Niobe / let nowe thy teares rayne
In to my penne/ and helpe eke in nede
Thou woful Mirre/ that feleſt myn hert blede
Of pytous wo/ and myn hande eke quake
Whan that I write/ for this maunes ſake

For vnto wo accordeth complaynyng
And doleful chere vnto heuyneſſe
To ſorowe alſo/ ſyghyng and weppyng
And pytous mournyng vnto dreryneſſe
And who that ſhal write of diſtreſſe
In party nedeth to knowe ſelyngly
Cauſe and roote of al ſuche malady

But I alas/ that am of wytte but dul
And haue no knowyng of ſuche matere
For to diſcryue/ and write at the ful
The woful complaynte/ whiche ye ſhal here
But euery lyke as dothe a ſtryuenere
That can no more/ what that he ſhal write
But as his maiſter beſyde dothe endyte

Right ſo fare I/ that of no ſentement
Save right nought in concluſyon
But as I herde whan I was preſent
This may complayne/ with a pytous ſoun
For euery lyke without addycion
Or diſencreaſe/ eyther more or leſſe
Forth reherce anon I wol me dreſſe

And if that any nowe be in this place
That fele in ſoun harmyng or ſemblaunce
Or hynderd were to hir ladyes grace
With falſe tonges/ that with perſyſtence
Slee trewe men/ that neuer dyd offence
In worde nor dede/ ne in her entent
If any ſuche be here nowe preſent

Let him of reuthe lay to audyence
With doleful chere/ and ſobre countenaunce
To here this man/ by ful hye ſentence
His mortal wo/ and his perturbaunce
Complaynyng/ nowe lyeng in a traunce
With ſoſes bleiſſe/ and rufful chere
Theffecte of whiche was as ye ſhal here.

The thought oppreſſed w' inward fyghes ſore
The paynful lyfe/ the body languiſſhyng
The woful goſte/ the herte rent and tore
The pytous chere paſt in complaynyng
The deedly face/ lyke aſſhes in ſhynyng
The ſalte teares that from myn eyen fal
Perce declare/ grounde of my paynes al

Whoſe herte is grounde to blede in heuyneſſe
The thought reſcepte of wo / & of complaynte
The breſt is cheſt of dole and dreryneſſe
The body eke ſo feble and ſo fayute
With hote and colde myn eyes is ſo mayute
That nowe I chyner/ for defaute of heate
And hote as glede/ nowe ſodaynly I ſweate

Nowe hote as fyre/ nowe colde as aſſhes dead
Nowe hote for colde/ nowe colde for hete agayn
Nowe colde as yce/ nowe as colde reed
For hete I brenne/ & thus betwyxte twayne
I poſſed am/ and al forwaſte in payne
So that my hete plainly as I ſee
Of grenous colde is cauſe euery dele

This is the colde of inwarde hye diſdayne
Colde of deſpyte/ and colde of cruel hate
This is ꝑ colde that euer dryſt his beſy payne
Ayenſt trouthe to fyght and debate
This is the colde that the fyre abate
Of trewe meaning/ alas the ſharpe whyſe
This is the colde that wol me bryng

In

for euer the better that in trouth I mente
With al my wyght faythfully to serue
With herte and al to be bisyent
The lesse thanke/alas I can deserue
Thus for my trouthe daunger doth me sterue
For one that sholde my deth of mercy let
Hath made despite ne we his swerde to whet

Ageynst me/and his arowes to fyle
To take vengeaunce of wylful cruelte
And tongue false throughe her sleyghtly wyle
Han gonne a werre/that wyl not stynted be
And false enuy/wrathe and enuyte
Han conspired ageynst al right and lawe
Of her malyce that trouthe shal be slawe

And malebouche/gan first the tale tel
To sclaundre trouthe of indignacion
And false reporte so loude range the bel
That misfortune and false suspection
Han trouthe brought to his dampnacion
So that alas/wrongfully he dyeth
And falsnesse now his place occupyeth

And entred is in to trouthes londe
And hath therof the ful possession
O right ful god that sittest the trouthe sonde
How we may thou suffre suche oppression
That falshode shulde haue iurisdiction
In trouthes right to slee him gyltles
In his presence he may not lyue in pees

falsly accused/and of his goode forlorne
Without answere/whyle he was absent
He dampned was/and may not be excused
For cruelte sate in iugement
Of hastynesse without auysement
And Dedayne Disdayne do execute anone
His iugement in presence of his lone

Attourney wayte none auoyded hem
To speke trouth/ne a worde to spede
To sayth or othe the nege fyst not stem
That is no gayn/but he wyl be mede
O lorde of trouthe to the I crie and clepe
How we may thou se thus thy persone
Without mercy murthred innocent

Now we god that arte of trouthe sourayne
And sest how I spe for trouthe bounde
So sore anyele in lones seruyce chayne
But at ꝑ deth thrugh gyte wᵗ many a wounde
That spedy are neuer for to sounde
And for my trouthe am dampned to the dethe
And not abyde/but drawe along the derthe

Lorde/and se in thyne eternal right
How we that myn herte professed whylom was
For to be trewe with al my ful myght
Duely to one/the whiche now alas
Of falsnes without any trespas
Thyne accusours hath taken vnto grace
And cherissheth hem/my dethe for to purchas

What meaneth this? what is this wonder wise?
Of purueyance if I shal it cal
Of god of loue/that false hem so assure
And trewe alas/bowne of the whele bey fal
And yet in soth/this is the worst of al
That falsshed wrongfully of troth hath ꝑ name
And troth ayeward of falsshed berth ꝑ blame

This blynde chaunce/this stormy auenture
In lone hath most his experience
For who that doth with trouthe most his cure
Shal for his mede synde most offence
That serueth lone with al his diligence
For who can sayne vnder so wykede
He sayleth not to synde grace and spede

For I loued one/ful longe syth agone
With al myne herte/body and ful myght
And to be dred my herte can not gone
From his herte but holde that he hath hyght
Though I be banysshed out of her syght
And by her mouth dampned that I shal dey
Vnto my deth/yet I wyl euer obey

For euer syth that the worlde began
Who so syst lowe/and in story rede
He shal aye synde that the trewe man
Was put aback where as the falsshede
Ysurthered was/for lone taketh non hede
To slee the trewe/and hath of hem no charge
Where as the false gothe frely at her large

Iudge

I take recorde of Palamydes
The trewe man/ the noble worthy knyght
That euer loued/ and of his payne no letters
Notwithstandyng his manhode & his myght
Loue vnto hym dyd ful great vntight
For aye the bet he dyd in chevalrye
The more he was hyndred by enuye

And aye the better he dyd in euery place
Through his knyghthode and busy payne
The further was he from his ladyes grace
For to her mercy myght he neuer attayne
And to his dethe he coude it not refrayne
For no daungere/ but aye obey and serue
As he best coude/ playnly tyl he sterue

What was the fyne also of Hercules
For al his conquest and his wouthynesse
That was of strength alone peerles
For lyke as bestes of hym lyst cypresse
He set pyllers throughe his hye prowesse
Away at Gaddes for to synnifye
That no man myght hym passe in chivalrye

The whiche pyllers serue beyonde Inde
Be set of golde/ for a remembraunce
And for all that was he set behynde
With hem that loue lyst fully awaunce
For hym sat last vpon a daunce
Agaynst whom helpe may no stryfe
For al his trouthe he lost his lyfe

Phebus also for al his persaunt hyght
Whan that he wente here in erthe lowe
Vnto the herte with Venus fyght
Ywounded was throughe Cupides bowe
And yet his lady lyst hym not to knowe
Thoughe for her loue his herte dyd blede
She lete hym go/ and took of hym no hede

What shal I speke of ponge Piramus?
Of trewe Tristram/ for al his hye renowne
Of Achylles/ or of Antonius
Of Arcite/ or of hym Palamowne
What was the ende of her passyonne
But after sorowe deth/ and thay fet graue
Lo here the gurdon that these louers haue

But false Jason with his doublenesse
That was vntrewe at Lolkos to Medee
And Theseus/ roote of vnkyndnesse
And with these two ete the false Enee
Lo thus the false aye in oure degre
Had in loue her lust and al her wyl
And saue falsshode/ there was none other syl

Of Thebes ete the false Arrete
And Demephoon ete for his slouthe
They had her lust & al that myght delyte
For al her falsshode and great vntrouthe
Thus euer loue alas/ and that is routhe
His false lyegen fostereth what he may
And sleeth the trewe vngoodly day by day

For trewe Adon was slayne with the bore
Amydde the forest in the grene shade
For Venus loue he sette al the store
But Vulcanus with her no merry made
The foule chorle had many nyghtes glade
Where thats her knyght and her may
To fynde merry comforte none he can

Also the ponge freshe Ypomedon
So lusty fre as of his courage
That for to serue with al his herte he chon
Athalante so fayre of her vysage
But loue alas quitte hym so his wage
With cruel daungere playnly at the last
That with the dethe guerdonlesse he past

Lo here the fyne of loues seruyse
Lo howe that loue can his seruauntes quyte
Lo howe he can his faythful men desguyse
To se the trewe men/ and falsse to reprue
Lo howe he dothe the fourthe of folowe lyte
In herte/ suche as moost his lust obey
To saue the falsse and do the trewe dey

For saythe not othe/ wordes ne assuraunce
Trewe meanynge/ awayte/ or busynesse
Stedfaste/ ne faythful attendaunce
Manhode ne myght in armes worthynesse
Pursute of worshyp nat dyspose welle
In straunge landes ridynge ne trauayle
Ful lytel or nought in loue doth auayle

Playne

Payn of dethe/ nor ny fere me fraude
Danger me thrafle/ fere we me fyknesse
Ne great empryses for to take on hande
Hedynge of blood/ ne manful hardynesse
Ne ofte woundynge at fawtes by dystresse
Nor my partynge of lyfe/ nor dethe also
All so for nought/ longe taseth no hede therto

But lesynges with her flatterye
Thoughe her falshede/ & with her doublenesse
With tales newe/ and many fayned lye
By false semblaunt and contrefet humblesse
Under colour depaynte with stedfastnesse
With fraude coucred under a pytous face
Accepte be now we rathest vnto grace

And eny fyry false now be best magnifye
With fayned pore and pusillanymy
They shamte her cause with false surquidrie
Under meanynge of humble entencion
To thinke one by her oppinion
And saye another/ to set hym selfe afore
And hyder trouth/ as it is sene ful ofte

The whiche thynge/ I dye now we all to dere
Thanked be Venus/ and the god Cupide
As it is sene by myne oppressed chere
And by this arowes that stycken in my syde
That same dethe/ I nothynge abyde
Fro day to day/ alas the harde whyle
Whan cure his darte that hym lyst to spede

Wo wofull herte for to ryue a two
For saute of mercy/ and lacke of pyte
Of her that causeth all my payne and wo
And syste not cures of grace for to se
Vnto my trouthe thoughe her cruelte
And most of all I me complayne
That she hath my to laughe at my payne

And wyfully hath my dethe swourne
Vngyltesse/ and wote no cause why
Sauf for the trouthe that I hed afourne
To her alone to serue faythfully
O god all sone/ vnto the I cry
And to thy blynde bo bable bente
Of that goest lowest I complayne me

And vnto thy slouny wykked Variaunce
Ymeut with chaunge and great vnstablenesse
Now vp now downe/ so reuyng is thy chaunce
That the to trust may be no sykernesse
I wyte it nothynge but thy doublenesse
And who that is an archer and is blynde
Shetith nothynge but shoteth by wende

And for that he hath no discrecion
Without aduyse he let his arowe go
For lacke of syght/ and also of reason
In his shotynge it happeth ofte so
To harte his frende rather than his fo
So doth this god with his sharpe stone
The trewe sleeth/ and letteth the false gone

And of his woundyng/ this the worst of al
Whan he hurteth doth to so cruel wiethe
And maketh the sicke for to crye and cal
Vnto his foe for to be his leche
And harde it is for a man to seche
Vpon the poynte of dethe in ieoperdye
Vnto his foe to synde remedye

Thus fareth it now we euery by me
That to my foe that gaue myne hert a wounde
Wote alle grace/ mercy/ and pyte
And namely there where none may be founde
For now we my sore my leche wyl confounde
And god of synde so hath set myne vre
Thy syues for to haue my wounde in cure

Alas the whyle now we that I was borne
O that I euer sawe the bright sonne
For now me I se that ful longe afore
O I was borne/ my destenye was spunne
By Parcas systerne to slee me if they conne
For they my dethe shopen of my sherte
Onely for trouthe I may it not asterte

The mygthy goddesse also of nature
That vnder god hath the gouernaunce
Of worldly thinges comytted to her cure
Disposed haue thoughe her wyse purueyaunce
To gyue my lady so moche suffysaunce
Of al beautee/ and therwithal plenyde
To mordre trouthe/ hath take deuyse to gyde

For

For bounte/beaute/shappe/and semelyhede
Prudence/ wyt/ passyngly fayrnesse
Benygne porte/glad chere with lowlyhede
Of womanhede right plenteous largnesse
Nature dyd in her fully impresse
Whan she her wrought/ & aither last disdayne
To hynder trouth/she made her chaūberlayne

Whan mystrust also/and false suspectyon
With myslyenge she made for to be
Cheef of counsayle to this conclusyon
For to cyple trouthe/ and ebe pyte
Out of her court to make mercy flee
So that despite nowe holdeth forthe her reyne
Through hasty bilene of tales that men feyne

And thus I am for my trouthe/ alas
Murdred & slayne/ with wordes sharpe & kene
Gyltlesse god wote of al trespas
And lye and blede vpon this colde grene
Nowe mercy swete/mercy my lyues quene
And to your grace of mercy yet I prepe
In your scripure that your may may depe

But if so be that I shal dye algate
And that I shal none other mercy haue
Yet of my dethe let this ben the date
That by your wyl I was brought to my graue
Or hastely/yf that you lyst me saue
Wyp sharpe woundes that ase so and blede
Of mercy charme/and also of womanhede

For other charme playnly is there none
But onely mercy/ to helpe in this case
For though my woundes blede euer in one
Wyp lyfe/ my dethe/standeth in your grace
And thoughe my gylte be nothynge/alas
I asse mercy in al my best entente
Redy to dye/ if that ye assente.

For there agaynst shal I neuer stryue
In worde ne werke/playnly I ne may
For leuer I haue than to be alyue
To dye sothly/ and al be to her paye
Ye thoughe it be this same day
Or whan that euer her lyst to deuise
Suffiseth me to dye in your seruise

And god wote my best wyl & thought of euery wight
Right as it is/in euery thynge thou mayst se
Yet er I dye/ with al my ful mighte
Lo wo I pray to graunt vnto me
That ye goodly/sayne/ferst/she and fre
Whiche onely sle me for defaute of trothe
Or that I dye/ ye may know me my trothe

For that in soth sufficeth me
And she it know me in euery circumstaunce
And after I am wel payde that she
If that her list of dethe to do vengeaunce
Onto me that am vnder her ligeaunce
It sytte me not her dome to disobeye
But at her lust wyllfully to deye

Without grutchinge or rebellyon
In wyl or worde/ holy I assent
Or any maner contradiction
Fully to be at her commaundement
And if I dye/ in my testament
Wyp herte I sende/ and my spirite also
What so euer she lyste with hem to do

And alder last to her womanhede
And to her mercy/ me I recommaunde
That sye no more here bet wepe hope and drede
Abidynge playnly what she list comaunde
For vtterly thus vpon no demaunde
Welcome to me whyle me lasteth breethe
Right at her chopse where it be lyfe or dethe

In this matter more what might I sayne
Dethe in her hande/ and in her wyl is al
Dothe lyfe and dethe/ my ioy and al my payne
And finally my hestes holde I shal
Tel my spirite by destenye fatal
Whan that her list fro my body wende
Haue here my trouth/& thus I make an ende

And with that worde he gan syghe as sore
Like as his herte ryue wolde atwayne
And felde his peace/ & spake no worde more
But for to se his wo and mortal payne
The teres gonne fro myne eyen rayne
Ful pitously for very inwarde thoghte
That I him sey/ so long tofore vnsoght

And al this whyle my selfe I kepte close
Amonge the bowes/and my selfe gonne hyde
Tyl at the last the wofull man arose
And to a lodge warde there besyde
Where al the day/his custome was tabyde
Hole to complayne of his paynes kene
From yere to yere vnder the bowes grene

And for bycause that it drewe to the nyght
And that the sonne his arke dyurnal
Passed was/so that his perfaunt light
His vyght bemes and his fyrmes al
Were in the waues of the water fal
Vnder the bordure of our occyan
His chare of golde/his course so swyftly ran

And whyle the twylyght fro the rabbes rede
Of Phebus lyght were beaut at alyte
A penne I tooke/and gan me fast spede
The wofull playnte of this man to wryte
Worde by worde as he dyd endyte
Like as I herde and coude hym the reporte
I haue here set/your hertes to disporte

If aught be myssed/saye the wyte on me
For I am worthy for to beare the blame
If any thynge myssed reported be
To make it the dytte for to seme same (fame
Through myn vnconnyng/but for to fayn the
Lyke as this man his complaynt dyd expresse
I alle mercy and forgyuenesse

And as I wrote/me thought I sawe a ferre
Ferre in the west lustely appere
Esperus the goodly bright fierce
Dogged/so hyght/so perfaunt eke of chere
I meane Venus with her bemes clere
That fayre fresshe emely to reherse
Is wonte of custome for to shewe at erse

And I as fast set aboute my thyng
And rudely thewed her gan I to pray
O lady Venus so hyght vpon vs se
Let not this man/for his trouthe dye
For that ye knowe he dedest wrong ne lye
Of thyne thy vengeaunce/where Dedamone fonde
Ayen hym a thousand bonyssh pore bondes

Togyder bothe twayne in the same whyle
That al the route abone celestial
At your shame gan laughe and smyle
Ah/sayde lady wylly fonde at al
Comforte to careful/o goddes immortal
Be helpynge nowe/and do thy dylygence
To let the stremes of thyne influence

Descende downe/in forthcryng of the trouthe
Namely of hem that lye in sorowe bounde
Shewe nowe thy myght on her wo haue routhe
Er false daunger sle hem and confounde
And specially let thy myght be founde
For to socoure what so that thou may
The trewe man that in the herber lay

And al trewe forther for his sake
O glad sterre/o lady Venus myne
And cause his lady hym to grace take
Her herte of sterle to mercy so enclyne
Er that thy bemes go vp to declyne
And er that thou nowe go fro vs adowne
For that sone thou haddest to Adowne

And whan she was gone to her rest
I rose anone/and home to bed wente
For wery me thought it for the best
Prayenge thus in al my best entente
That al trewe/that be with daunger shente
With mercy may in release of her payne
Recured be/er May come eyte agayne

And for that I ne may no lenger wake
Farewel ye louers al that be trewe
Prayeng to god/and thus my leue I take
That er the sonne to morowe be rysen newe
And er he haue aperyd rosey hewe
That eche of you may haue suche a grace
Him selfe lady in armes to embrace

I meane thus/in al honestie
Without more ye may togyder speke
Whyl so pe lyst at good leyserte
Therefore my boy to abyde her gentyl beste
On takeyng vnto be wreke
That hath forbonge of his malyce and enuye
Werred trouthe with his tyranny.

Lenuoye. Prynesse

Pryncesse pleaseth it to your benygnyte
This lytel dyte to haue in mynde
Of womanhode also for to se
Your may may your mercy fynde
And pyte ese/ that long hath be behynde
Let hym agayne be pronosed to grace
For by my trouthe it is agaynst kynde
False daungere to occupye his place

Go lytel quayre vnto my lymes quene
And my very hertes souerayne
And be right glad/ for she shal the sene
Suche is thy grace/ but I alas in payne
Am left behynde/ & not to whom to playne
For mercy/ruthe/grace/and ese pyte
Exiled be/ that I may not attayne
Recure to fynde of/ myne aduersyte.

Explicat.

A preyse of women.

Al tho ỹ lyste of women cupl to speke
And sayn of hem worse than they des-
I pray to god that her neckes to breke (serue
Or on some cupl deth mote tho iogleres sterue
For euery man were holden hem to serue
And do hem worshyp/ honour/ and seruyce
In euery maner that they best coude deuyse

For we ought first to thinke on what maneres
They brig vs forth/ & what payn they endure
First in our byrth/ and syth fro pere to pere
How we busely they done their busy cure
To kepe vs fro euery myschaunce
In our youth whan we haue no myght
Our selfe to kepe/neither by day nor nyght

Alas/ how we may we say on hem but wele
Of whom we were fostred and pore
And ben al our sorowes cure trewe as stele
And for our sake sul ofte they suffre sore
Without women were al our ioye lore
Wherfore we ought al women to obey
In al goodnesse/ I can no more say

This is wel knowen/ and hath ben of olde
That women ben cause of al worshyppe
Of knyghthode/ nobleye/ eschewyng al malice
Encrease of worshyp/ and of al worthynesse
Therto curteys & mekenesse/ & grounde of al gode
Glad & merry/ & trewe in euery wyse (nesse
That any gentyl herte can thynke or deuyse

And though any wold truste to your vntrouthe
And to your fayre wordes wold aught assent
In good fayth me thynketh it were gret ruthe
That other women shold for her gylt be shent
That neuer knewe me wyst nought of her entent
Me lyste not to here the fayre wordes ye write
Whiche ye you payne fro day to day endyte

But who may be ware of your false vntrouthe
That ye so busyly payne and endute
For ye wyl swere that ye neuer knewe
Ne sawe the woman/ neyther moche ne lyte
Saue onely her to whom ye had delite
As for to serue of al that euer ye sey
And for her loue must ye nedes dey

Thō wyl ye swere that ye knewe neuer before
What loue was ne his dredful obseruaunce
But no we ye fele that he can wounde sore
Wherfore ye put you in to her gouernaunce
Whō loue hath ordeyned you to serue & do plē
Wt al your myght your lytel lyues space (sesaūce
Whiche endeth sone/ but if she do you grace

And than to bedde wyl ye soone drawe
And sone fast ye wyl you than sayne
And swere fast your lady hath you slawe
And braydi you sodenly in so high a payn
That fro your bedde may no mā you restreyn
With a daungerous look of her eyen clere
That to your bedde must ye nedes go

Thus wyl ye mourne/ thus wyl ye sighe sore
As though your herte asoyn in two wold breste
And swere fast that ye may lyue no more
Thus o wyse lady/ that ought is ye left
Bringe myne herte somdele in to rest
Do if you lyst mercy on me to haue
Thus your vntrouth wyl euer mercy craue

Thus

Thus wol ye playne/tho ye nothyng smerte
These innocent creatures for to begyle
And yf were to hem/so wounded is your herte
For her loue/that ye may lyue no whyle
Scarsly so longe as one myght go a myle
So hyeth bethe/to bringe you to an ende
But if your souerayn lady lyst you to amende

And if for routhe she cõforte you in any wyse
For pyte of your false othes yerr
Do that innocẽt wenyth ꝑ it be as you deuyse
And wenyth your herte be as she may herr
Thus for to comfort/a somwhat do you herre
Than wol these tangiers demt of her ful yll
And sayne that ye haue her fully at your wyll

Lo so we rede her tonges ben/and prest
To speke harme of women causeles
Alas/why myght ye not as wel say the best
As for to deme hem thus gyltyles
In your herte ywis there is no gentylnesse
That of yͤ owen gylt/lyst thus women fame
Now by my trouthe/me thynke ye be to blame

For of women cometh this worldly wele
Wherfore we ought to worshep hem euermore
And though it mishap one/we ought for to fele
For it is al thorough our false lore
That day and nyght/ we payne be euermore
With many an othe/these women to begyle
With false tales/and many a wicked wyle

And if falshede shulde be rehersed and tolde
In women/ywys ful trouthe were
Not as my wyt/by a thousande folde
For al ryght ywys they stande clere
In any thyng that euer I coude of here
But if enuyous of these wemen it make
That hem to flatteren connen neuer slake

I wolde fayne wete wher euer ye coude here
Without mens lyenge/what women dyd amys
For ther ye may get hem/ye lye fro yere to yere
And many a gaddyng ye make to hem ywys
For I coude neuer here/ne know wyt of this
Where euer ye coude fynde in any place
That euer women besought you of grace

There ye you payne/with al your ful myght
With al your herte/and al your besynesse
To pleasen hem/bothe by day and nyght
Prayeng hem of her grace and gentylnesse
To haue pyte vpon your great distresse
And ꝑ they wolde on your payne haue routhe
And slen you not/sens ye meane but trouthe

Thus may ye se that they ben faunteles
And innocent to al your werkes slye
And al your crastes that touche falsnesse
They know we hem not/ne maye hem not espye
So swarte ye/ that ye must nedes dye
But if they wolde of her womanheed
Vpon you rewe/it that ye be deed

And than your lady/and your hertes quene
Ye cal hem/and ther with ye syghe sore
And say/my lady I trowe that it be sene
In what payne that I haue lyued ful yore
But now we I hope that ye wol no more
In these paynes suffre me for to dwel
For of al goodnesse/ywys ye be the wel

Lo whiche a paynted processe can ye make
These harmlesse creatures for to begyle
And whan they slepe/ye payne you to wake
And to bethinke you on many a wicked wyle
But ye shal se the day ꝑ ye shal curse ꝑ whyle
That ye so besily dyd your entent
Hem to begyle/that falshede neuer ment

For this ye know wel/though I wolde lye
In women is al trouthe and stedfastnesse
For my good faythe/I neuer of hem spye
But moche worshyp/vertue/and gentylnesse
Right comyng/fayre/and ful of meekenesse
Good and glad/and so wys I you ensure
Be thus goodly angelyke creature

And if it happe a man be in disease
She dothe her busynesse/and her ful payne
With al her myght/hym to comforte & plese
If fro his disease she myght him restrayne
In worde ne dede ywys she wol not fayne
But with al her myght/she dothe her besynesse
To bringe hym out of his heuynesse

Iudo Lo

Lo what gentylleſſe theſe women haue
If we coude vnowe it for our rudeneſſe
Howe beſy they be vs to kepe and ſaue
Bothe in heale/and alſo in ſickneſſe
And alway right ſory for our diſtreſſe
In euery maner/ thus ſhewe they routhe
That in hem is al goodneſſe and trouthe

And ſyth we fynde in hem gētyleſſe & trouth
Worſhyp/bounte/and fyndeneſſe euermore
Let neuer this gentyleſſe/through your ſlouth
In her fynde trouthe be aught forlore
That in woman is/and hath ben ful yore
For in reuerence of the heuens quene
We ought to worſhyp al women that bene

For of al creatures that euer were get & borne
This wote ye wel/a woman was the beſt
By her was recouered ỹ blyſſe ỹ we had lorn
And through ỹ woman ſhal we come to reſt
And ben ſaued/if that our ſelfe leſt
Wherfore me thynketh/if that we had grace
We oughten honour women in euery place

Therfore I rede/that to our lyues ende
Fro this tyme forth/while that we haue ſpace
That we haue treſpaced/purſue to amende
Prayeng our lady/wel of al grace
To brynge vs vnto that blyſſful place
There as ſhe & al good women ſhal be in fere
In heuen aboue/amonge the angels clere.

Explicit.

The houſe of Fame.

GOd louene be euery dreme to good
For it is wonder thyng by the rood
To my wytte/what cauſeth ſweuenes
Or the more or on euenes
And why the effecte folowith of ſome
And of ſome it ſhal neuer come
Why that it is an auyſion
And why this a reuelacion
Why this a dreme/why that a ſweuen
And not to euery man lyche euen
Why this a fantome/why that oracles
I not: but who ſo of theſe myracles
The cauſes knowe bette than I
Defyne he/ for I certainly
Ne can hem nat/ne neuer thynke
To buſy my wytte for to ſwynke
To knowe of her ſignifycations
The gendres/ne diſtynctions
Of the tymes of hem/ne the cauſes
Or why this is more than that is
Or peue folkes complexions
Make hem dreme of reflexions
Or elſe thus/as other ſayne
For the great feblenеſſe of her brayne
By abſtynence/or by ſickneſſe
Puſon/ fatyſe/or great diſtreſſe
Or elſe by diſordynaunce
Or natural accuſtomaunce
That ſome men be to curyous
In ſtudye/or melancolyous
Or thus: ſo inly ful of drede
That no man may him bote rede
Or elſe that deuocion
Of ſome/ and contemplacion
Cauſen ſuche dremes ofte
Or that the cruel fyre vnſofte
Of hem that loues ledeu
Ofte hopen moche or dreden
That purely her impreſſyons
Cauſen hem to haue viſyons
Or if ſpyrites han the myght
To make folke to dreme on nyght
Or if the ſoule of proper kynde
Be ſo perfyte as men fynde
That it wote what is to come
And that he warneth al and ſome
Of euryche of her auentures
By auiſyons/or by fygures
But that our fleſſhe hath no myght
To vnderſtande it a ryght
For it is warned to derkely
But why the cauſe is/ not wote I
Wel worthe of this thyng clerkes
That treaten of that/ and of other werkes
For I of none opynion
Nyl as now make mencion
But onely that the holy Rood

Toune

Tourne to euery lusty to good
For neuer sythe I was borne
Ne no man els me before me
Gette I trowe stedfastly
So wonderful a dreme as I.
The tenth day now of Decembre
The whyche/as I can remembre
I wol you tellen every dele
But at my begynnyng trusteth wele
I wol make invocacion
With a deuoute spetial devocion
Vnto the god of slepe anone
That dwelleth in a cave of stone
Upon a streme that renneth fro Lete
That is a floode of ful swete
Besyde a folde/ that men clepe Cymery
There slepeth ayr this god Somnery
With his sleepy thousande sonnes
That alway to slepe her wone is
And to this god that I of rede
Praye I/that he wol me spede
Hys swevens for to tel a ryghte
If every dreme stande in his myghte
And he that mouer is of al
That is and was/and euer shal
So gyue hem hope that it here
Or al that they dreme to pere
And for to stande al in grace
Of her loues/for ny what place
That hem were leuest for to stonde
And shelde hem from powerte and shonde
And from every vnhappe and disease
And sende hem that may hem please
That taketh wel and scorneth nought
Ne it misdeme in her thought
Through malycious entencion
And who so through presumpcion
Or hate or scorne/or through enuy
Dispyte or wrathe/or felony
Wysdome it/praye I Jesus good
Dreme he barefote or dreme he shood
That euery harme that any man
Hath had sythe the worlde began
Befal hym therof or he sterue
And graunt that he may it deserue
Lo/ with right suche a conclusyon
As had of his auysyon
Cersus/that was kyng of Ayde
That fryght vpon a tyket dyde
Hys prayer shal he have of me
I am no bette in charyte.

NOwe herken/as I have you sayde
What that I mette or I awayde
Of Decembre the tenthe day
Whan it was nyght/to slepe I lay
Right as I was wonte to doone
And syk a slepe wonder soone
As he that was wery forgo
On pylgrymage myles two
To the corps of saynt Leonarde
To maken sythe/that erst was harde
But as I slepte me mette I was
Within a temple ymade of glas
In whyche there were mo ymages
Of golde/standyng in fondue stages
In mo ryche tabernacles
And with perre mo pynnacles
And mo curyous portratures
And queynt maner of sygures
Of golde worke/than I sawe euer
But certainly I nyste neuer
Where that it was/but wel wyste I
It was of Venus redely
Hys temple/for in purtreture
I sawe anon right her sygure
Naked fletyng in a see
And also on her herd parde
Her rose garlande whyte and rede
And her comble to kembe her hede
Her doutes/and eke Cupido
Her blynde sonne/and Vulcano
That in his face was ful browne
But as I romed vp and downe
I founde that on the wal there was
Thus writen on a table of bras
I wol now synge if that I can
The armes/and also the man
That first came through fortune
Fugityf fro Troye the countre
In to Italye/with ful moche pyne
Vnto the strondes of Laryne
And tho began the storme anone
As I shal tellen you echone
First sawe I the destruction
Of Troye/through the grete Synon

With his false lyinge forswerynges
And with his chere and his lesynges
Made a horse/brought in to Troy
Of whiche Troyans losse al her joy
And after this was grauen/alas
Howe Ilions castel assayled was
And won/and kyng Priamus slayne
And Polytes his sonne certayne
Dysplously of dan Pyrrus
And neyt that sawe I howe Venus
Whan that she sawe the castel brende
Downe from heuen she gan descende
And bade her sonne Eneas to flye
And howe he fledde/and howe that he
Escaped was from al the prees
And tooke his father/olde Anchyses
And bare hym on his backe away
Crying alas and welaway
The whiche Anchises in his hande
Bare tho the goddes of the lande
Thylke that vnbrenned were.
Than sawe I next al in fere
Howe Creusa/dan Eneas wyfe
Whom that he loued al his lyfe
And her yonge sonne Iulo
And eke Ascanyus also
Fledden eke/with dirry chere
That it was pyte for to here
And in a forest as they went
At a tournyng of a went
Howe Creusa was lost/alas
That rede nat I/howe that it was
Howe he her sought/and howe her goste
Bade hym sitte the grekes hoste
And sayd he nusse in Italye
As was his destynee/saune fayle
That it was pyte for to here
Whan her spouse gan appere
The wordes that she to hym sayde
And for to bepeke sonne hym prayde
There sawe I grauen eke howe he
His father eke/and his meyne
With his shippes gan to sayle
To warde the countre of Italye
As streyght as they myghten go
There sawe I eke the cruel Iuno
That ate dan Iupyters wyfe
That hated alle thy lyfe
Al the Troyan blode
Rey and crye as thou were woode
On Eolus/the god of wyndes
To blowen out of al kyndes
So loude/that he shulde drenche
Lorde/lady/grome/and wenche
Of al the Troyans nacion
Without any of her saluacion
There sawe I suche tempest aryse
That euery herte myght agryse
To se it paynted on the wal
There sawe I eke grauen withal
Venus/howe ye myght dare
Wepyng with ful wofull chere
Praying Iupyter on hye
To saue and kepe that neuye
Of that trogian Eneas
Sythe that he her sonne was
There sawe I Ioues Venus kysse
And graunted was of the tempest lysse
There sawe I howe the tempest stynte
And howe with al pyne he wente
And paynely toke a ryuage
In to the countre of Cartage
And on the morowe howe that he
And a kynght that hyght Achate
Metten with Venus that day
Goyng in a queynte aray
As she had be an huntresse
With wynde blowyng vpon her tresse
And howe Eneas began to playne
Whan he knewe her of his payne
And howe his shippes brent were
Or elle lost/he nyst where
Howe she gan him comforte tho
And bade him to Cartage go
And there he shulde his folke fynde
That in the see were lefte behynde
And shortely of this thyng to pace
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dydo/quene of that countre
That shortly for to tellen the
Became his lour/and let hym do
Al that weddyng longeth to
What shulde I speke it more queynte
Or payne me my wordes to peynte
To speke of lone/it wol nat be
I can nat of that faculte

And

Had ese to telling of the maner
Howe they first arquaynted were
It were a longe processe to tel
And ouer longe for you to dwel
There saw I grane howe Eneas
Tolde to Dydo euery caas
That hym was tydde vpon the see
And este grauen was howe that she
Made of him shortly at a worde
Her lyfe/her loue/her lust/her lorde
And oyd to him al reuerence
And layde on him al the defpence
That any woman myght do
Wenyng it had al be so
As he her swore/and therby demed
That he was good/for he suche semed
Alas what harme dothe apparence
Whan it is false in existence
For he to her a traytour was
Wherfore she slowe her selfe alas
Lo/howe a woman dothe amys
To loue him that vnknowen is
For by Christ/lo thus it fareth
It is nat al golde that glareth
For also stouke I wel myn heed
There may be vnder goodlyheed
Couered many a shrewde vice
Therfore be no wight so nyce
To take a loue onely for chere
Or speche or for frendly manere
For this shal euery woman fynde
That some man of his pure kynde
Wol shewen outwarde the fayrest
Tyl he haue caught that what him lest
And than wol he causen fynde
And swere howe she is vnkynde
Or false or prouy/or double was
Al this say I by Eneas
And Dydo/ and her nyece lest
That loued al to soone a gest
Wherfore I wol say o prouerbe
That he that sully knoweth the herbe
May safely lay it to his eye
Withouten drede this is no lye
But let vs speke of Eneas
Howe he betrayed her/alas
And lefte her ful vnkyndely
So whan she saw al vtterly
That he wolde her of trouthe fayle
And wenden from her in to Itayle
She gan to wringe her handes two
Alas (quod she) that me is wo
Alas/is euery man thus trewe
That euery yere wol haue a newe
If it so longe tyme endure
Or ells thus paraunenture
And thus of one he wol haue fame
In magnifying of his owne name
Another for frendshyp sayethe he
And yet there shal the thirde be
That is taken for delyte
Lo/or ells for singuler profyte
In suche wordes gan complayne
Dydo of her great payne
As me mette dremyng redyly
None other authour allege wol I
Alas (quod she) my swete herte
Haue pyte on my sorowes smerte
And slee me nat/go nat away
O woful Dydo/ welaway
(Quod she) vnto her selfe tho
O Eneas what wol ye do
O that your loue ne your bonde
That ye swore with your right honde
Ne my cruel dethe (quod she)
May holde you styl here with me
O/ haue ye of my dethe no pyte
Iwys myn owne dere herte ye
Knowe ful wel that neuer yet
As farre as euer I had wyt
Agylte you/in thought ne in dede
O/ haue ye men suche goodlyhede
In speche/ and neuer a dele of trouthe
Alas that euer had routhe
Any woman on a false man
Nowe I se wel/ and tel can
We wretched women can no arte
For certayne/for the more parte
Thus we ben serued euerychone
Howe sore that ye men can grone
Anon as we haue you receyued
Certainly we ben disceyued
For though your loue lest a season
Wayte vpon the conclusyon
And ese howe ye determyne
And for the more parte deffyne

O welawaye that I was borne
For through you my name is lorne
And myn actes redde and songe
Ouer al this lande in euery tonge
O wicked fame/ for therr nys
Nothyng so swyfte lo as she is
O sothe is/euery thyng is wyst
Though it be conerde with the myst
Ese though I myght durey euer
That I haue done erreuer I neuer
That it ne shal be sayd/alas
I shamed was through Eneas
And that I shal thus ruged be
Lo right as she hath done/nowe she
Wol done estesones hardely
Thus say the people prinely
But that is done nys nat to done
But al her complaynte ne her mone
Certayne auayled her nat a fire
And whan she wyste sothly/he
Was forthe in to his shyppe agone
She in to chambre went anone
And called on her suster Anne
And gan her to complayne thanne
And sayd/that she cause was
That she first loued hym/alas
And first counsayled her therto
But what/whan this was sayd and do
She roste her seluen to the herte
And deyde through the woundes smerte
But al the maner howe she deyde
And al the wordes howe she seyde
Who so to knowe it hath purpose
Rede Virgyle in Eneydos
Or the pystels of Ouyde
What that she wrote/or that she dyde
And nere it to longe to endyte
By god I wolde it here write
But welawaye/ the harme and routhe
That hath betydde for suche vntrouthe
As men may ofte in bokes rede
And alday sene it yet in dede
That for to thynken it tene is
Lo Demophon/duke of Athenys
Howe he forswore him falsely
And trayed Phyllis wickedly
That kynges doughter was of Thrace
And falsely gan his terme pace
And whan she wyste that he was false
She honge her selfe right by the halse
For he had done her suche vntrouthe
Lo/was nat this a wo and routhe
Ese loste howe false and recheles
Was to Briseyda Achilles
And Paris to Denone
And Jason to Hipsyphile
And este Jason to Medea
And Hercules to Dyanira
For he lefte her for Iole
That made hym take his dethe parde
Howe false was ese Theseus
That as the storie telleth vs
Howe he betrayed Adriane
The deuel be his soules bane
For had he laughed or ploured
He muste haue ben al deuoured
If Adriane ne had be
And for she hed of hym pyte
She made hym fro the dethe escape
And he made her a ful false iape
For after this within a whyle
He lefte her slepynge in an yle
Deserte alone right in the see
And stale away and let her be
And toke her suster Phedra tho
With hym/and gan to shyp go
And yet he had swore to here
Ony al that euer he coude swere
That so she saued hym his lyfe
He wolde taken her to his wyfe
For she desyred nothyng elles
In certayne/as the boke vs telles
But for to excuse this Eneas
Fullyche of al his great trespas
The boke sayethe sauns fayle
The goddes bade hym go to Itayle
And leauen Affriques regnoun
And sayle Dydo and her to wone
Tho sawe I graue howe to Itayle
Dan Eneas gan for to sayle
And howe the tempest al began
And howe he lost his stere sman
Whiche that the sterne/or he toke kepe
Smote ouer the borde as he slepe
And also sawgh I howe Sibyle
And Eneas beside an yle

To hell wente for to ſe
His father Anchyſes the ſage
And how he there founde Polymnaſte
And alſo Dido/and Deiphebus
And eueriche tourment eke in Hell
Ha we he/whiche louge is for to tell
Whiche paynes who ſo lyſte knowe
He muſt rede many a rowe
In Vergyle or in Claudian
Or Dauit/ that it telleth can
Tho ſawe I eke al the armayle
That Eneas had made in Italye
And with kynge Latyn his trete
And al the batayls that he
Was at hym ſelfe/and his knyghtes
Or he had al y'won his righten
And how he Turnus reſte his lyfe
And wan Lauyna to his wyfe
And al the meruey lous ſignales
Of the goddes celeſtiales
How maugre Iuno/Eneas
For al her ſteyght and her compas
Atcheued al his auenture
For Jupiter was on hym curr
At the prayer of Venus
Whiche I praye alway ſaue Vs
And vs aye/of our ſorowes lyght
Whan I had ſene al this fyght
In this noble temple thus
Hey lorde thought I/ that madeſt Vs
Yet ſawe I neuer ſuche nobleſſe
Of ymages/ nor ſuche richeſſe
As I ſe graue in this churche
But naught wote I who dyd hem worche
Ne where I am/ne in what coumtre
But now wyl I out goue and ſe
Right at the weſtel as I can
Sene ought where ſtyrynge any man
That maye me tellen where I am
Whan I out of the dore cam
I faſt about me beheld
Than ſawe I but a large feld
As farre as euer I myght ſe
Without toune/houſe/or tre
Or buſſhe/or graſſe/or eared lande
For al the felde was but of ſande
As ſmal as men maye ſe at eye
In the deſerte of Lybye
Ne no maner creature
That is yſouned by nature
Ne ſawe I/ me to rede or wyſſe
Do Lhuſt thought I/that art my bliſſe
From fantoy and illuſioun
We ſaue/and with deuocioun
Myne eyen to the heuen I caſt
Tho was I ware/lo at the laſt
That faſt by the ſonne on hye
As beſene myght I with myne eye
Me thought I ſawe an Egle ſoure
But that it ſemed moche more
Than I had any Egle yſeyne
This is as ſothe as dethe certeyne
It was of golde and ſhone ſo bryght
That neuer ſawe men ſuche a fyght
But if the heuen had y'wonne
Al newe of god another ſonne
So ſhone the Egles fethers bright
And ſom what doun warde gan it lyght.

¶ Explicit liber primus.

NOwe herken euery maner man
That Engliſſhe vnderſtande can
And lyſteth of my dreme to here
For nowe at erſt ſhal ye lere
So ſely and ſo dredeful a viſyon
That I ſaye neyther Scipion
Ne kynge Nabugodonoſore
Pharao/ Turnus/ne Alcanore
Ne metten ſuche a dreme as this
Nowe ſayne bliſſful/O Lyrus
So be my ſauour at this tyme
That ye me tendyte and tyme
Helpeth/ that in Pernaſo dwel
Beſyde Elycon the clere wel
O thought/that wrote al that I met
And in the treſons it ſet
Of my braine/nowe ſhal men ſe
If any vertue in the be
To tel al my dreme a right
Nowe kythe thy engyn and thy myght
This Egle of whiche I haue you tolde
That with fethers ſhone al of golde
Whiche that ſo hye gan to ſoure
I gan beholde more and more
To ſene her beaute and the wonder
But neuer was that dynte of thonder

Ne that

Ne that thynge that men cal soudre
That smyte somtyme a towre to poudre
And in his swyfte commynge bisende
That so swythe gan dounwarde discende
As this foule whan it beheelde
That I a rowme was in the felde
And with his grym pawes stronge
Within his sharpe naples longe
We slyeng at a swappe he heente
And with his fours agayne vp wente
We carpenge in his clawes starke
As lyghtly as I had ben a larke
How hye I can not telleu powe
For I came vp/I nyst neuer howe
For so astonyed and aswouned
Was euery vertue in me bounded
What with his fours and my dreed
That al my felynge gan to deed
For why/it was a great affray
Thus I longe in his clawes lay
Tyl at last he to me spake
In mannes voyce/and sayd awake
And be not agast so for shame
And called me tho by my name
And for I shulde better abrayde
Me to awake/thus he sayde
Right in the same voyce and steuyn
That vseth one that I can neuyn
And with that voyce sothe to sayne
My mynde came to me agayne
For it was goodly sayd to me
So nas it neuer wonte to be
And here withal I gan to stere
As he me in his fete bere
Tyl that he felte that I had heate
And felte ese tho myne herte beate
And tho gan he me to disporte
And with gentyl wordes me comforte
And sayd twyse/sayntt Mary
Thou arte a nyous thynge to cary
And nothynge nedeth it perde
For also wyse god helpe me
As thou no harme shalte haue of this
And this ese that betydde the is
Is for thy lore and for thy prowe
Lette se/darst thou leue yet nowe
Be ful ensured boldely
I am thy frende/and therwith I
Gan for to wonder in my mynde
O god (quod I) that madest al kynde
Shal Jnome other wyse doe
Whether Joue wyl me stelyfye
Or what thynge may this signifye
I am nother Enoche ne Helye
Ne Romulus/ne Ganymede
That were bore vp as men rede
To heuen with dan Jupiter
And made the goddes botelier
Lo/this was tho my fantasy
But he that bare gan espy
That I so thought/and sayd this
Thou demest of thy selfe amys
For Joue is not there aboute
I dare the put ful out of doute
To make of the yet a sterre
But er I bere the moche ferre
I wyl the tel what I am
And whider thou shalte/and why I cam
To do this/so that thou take
Good herte/and not for fere quake
Gladly (quod I) nowe wel (quod he)
First/I that in my fete haue the
Of whom thou hast feare and wonder
I am dwellynge with the god of thonder
Whiche men calleu Jupiter
That dothome slyen ful ofte fer
To do al his commandement
And for thou cause he hath me sent
To the: herke nowe by thy trouthe
Certayne he hath of the routhe
That thou hast so truely
Longe serued entierely
His blynde neuewe Cupido
And eke Venus also
Without guerdon euer yet
And netheles hast set thy wyt
Al thoughte in thy heed ful lytel is
To make bokes/songes/and dytees
In tyme/or ele in Ledenes
As thou best canst in trouthe
Of loue/and of his seruauntes eke
That haue his seruyce sought/and seke
And payneste the to preyse his arte
Although thou haddest neuer parte
Wherfore also god me blesse
Joue hath a great gentylesse

And

And sertes eke that thou hyste make
Ayenst ful ofte thyne hed to ake
In thy studye so thou muset
And curremoun of lowe endytest
In honour of hym and preysynges
And in his folkes sutherynges
And in her mater al bestyest
And not hym ne his folke despisest
Alsoughe thou mayst go in the bonnes
Of hem/that hym lyst not ensamples
Wherfore as I sayd ryght
Jupiter considereth wel this
And also beauspar/of other thynges
That in thou hast no tidynges
Of lowes folke if they be glade
Or of nothynge ele that god made
And not only fro farre countrez
That no tidynges comen to the
Not of thy very neyghbores
That dwellen almost at thy dores
Thou herest neyther that ne this
Nat when thy labour al done is
And hast made al thy rekenynges
In stede of rest and of newe thynges
Thou gost home to thyne house anone
And also domme as a stone
Thou syttest at another boke
Tyl fully dased is thy loke
And studyest thus as an Hermyte
Alsoughe thyne abstynence is lyte
And thus fro Jowis/throughe his grace
Wyl that I bere the to a place
Where that stant the house of Fame
And to do the sporte and game
In some recompensacioun
Of thy labour and deuocioun
That thou hast had to causeles
To god Cupido the reuelous
And thus thus god throughe his mercyte
Wyl with some manor thynge the quite
Do that thou wylt be of good chere
For trust wel that thou shalte here
Whan we be comen there as I say
Mo wonder thynges hare I say
And of lowes folke mo tidynges
Bothe soth and lesynges
And mo sondes newe begon
And longe serued tyl lowe is won
And mo louers ecusedly
That ben betrayed/no may wote why
But as a shyppe may startyn on flote
And mote forthe and warfare
Whyle they fynde lowe of flete
As thynke men/and euer at wete
Who discordes and mo ialousies
Who murmures/and mo nouelries
And also mo dissymulacions
And ese feyned reparacions
And mo verdes in two houres
Without rasour or syssoures
Ymade/than grapnes lyke of sandes
And ese mo holdynge in mo handes
And also mo remouelaunces
Of olde forsetyn acqueyntaunces
Who soudayes/and mo accordes
Than ony instrumentes ben corded
And ese of lowe mo eschaunges
Than euer come were in graunges
Vnneth mayst thou trowen this
(Quod he) No so helpe me god as wys
(Quod I) No why (quod he) for it
Were impossyble to my wyt
Though Fame had al the ppes
In al a realme and al espyes
How we that yet he sholde here al this
Or they espyen/O yes yes
(Quod he) to me/that can I prene
By reason/worthy for to leue
So that thou gyue thyn aduertence
To vnderstande my sentence
First shal thou here where she dwelleth
Right so as thyne owne bokes telleth
Her palays standeth as I shal say
Right euen amydden of the way
Betwene herthe/and se
That what so euer in al these thre
Is spoken in prose or apperte
The way therto is so ouerte
And stante ese in so iuste a place
That euery soune mote to it pace
Or what so cometh from any tonge
Be it rowned/redde/or songe
Or spoken in secrete or diede
Certayne it mote thyder nede
Now herken wel/for why I wyl
Tellen the a proper syl

And

And a worthy demonstratyon
In myne ymagination
  Gesstrap/thou wottest wel this.
That euery kyndly thynge that is
Hath a kyndly stede therr he
Hay best in it conserued be
Vnto whiche place euery thynge.
Throughe his kyndly enclynynge
Heueth for to come to
Whan that it is away therfro
As thus. Lo how we thou mayst al day se
Take any thynge that heuy be
As stone or leed/or thynge of weyght
And bere it neuer so hye on heyght
Let go thyne hande/ it falleth downe
Right so say I by fyre or sowne
Or smoke/ or other thinges lyght
Alway they seke vpwarde on heyght
Light thynges vp/ and downwarde charge
Whyle euerriche of hem be at large
And for this cause/thou mayst wel se
That euery ryuer vnto the see
Enclyned is to go by kynde
And by these kylles as I fynde
Haue fysshes dwellynge in flode and see
And trees eke on the erthe be
Thus euery thynge by his reason
Hath his owne propre mancyon
To whiche he seketh to repeyre
There as it shulde nat appeyre
  Lo/ this sentence is knowen couthe
Of euery philosophers mouthe
As Aristotel/ and dan Platone
And other clerkes many one
And to confirme my reasonn
Thou wost wel that speche is sowne
Or els no man myght it here
Nowe herke what I wyl the lere
  Sowne is not/but eyre ybroken
And euery speche that is spoken
Loude or prime/ soule or fayre
In his substaunce is but eyre.
For as flame is but fyghted smoke
Right so is sowne eyre ybroke
But this may be in many wyse
Of whiche I wyl the deuyse
As sowne cometh of pype or harpe
For whan a pype is blowen sharpe
The eyre is thryst with violence
And rent: Lo/this is my sentence
Eke/ whan men harpe strynges smyte
Whether it be moche or lyte
Lo/with the stroke the eyre to breketh
And right so breketh it whan men speketh
Thus wost thou wel what thynge is speche
Nowe herke forthe/ I wyl the teche
Howe euery speche/ hoper or sowne
Throughe his multiplycacyon is wrowne
Thoughe it were pyped of a mouse
Mote nedes come to Fames house
I proue it thus/take hede nowe
By experience/ for yf that thou
Threwe in a water nowe a stone
Wel wost thou it wyl make anone
A lytel roundel as a cercle
Paraunenture/as brode as a couercle
And right anone thou shalte se wel
That whele cercle wyl cause another whele
And that the thrydde/and so forthe brother
Euery cercle causynge other
Broder than hym selfe was
And thus fro roundel to compas
Eche abroute other goynge
Causeth of others sterynge
And multiplyeng euermo
Tyl it be so farre go
That it at bothe brynkes be
Al thoughe thou may it not se
Aboue/ yet gothe it al wel vnder
Though thou thynke it a great wonder
And who so sayethe of trouthe I vary
Vndo hym proue the contrary
And right thus euery worde ywys
That loude or preue yspoken is
Moueth first an eyre aboute
And of his mouynge out of doute
Another eyre anone is moued
As I haue of the water proued
That euery cercle causeth other
Right so of eyre my leue brother
Euerriche eyre in other stereth
More and more/and speche vp bereth
Or hoper or noyse/worde or sowne
Aye throughe multiplycacyon
Tyl it be at the house of Fame
Take it on ernest or in game

Nowe

Nowe haue I tolde/if thou haue mynde
Howe speche or sowne/of pure kynde
Enclyned is vp warde to meue
This mayst thou fele wel by preue
And that some stede ywys
That euery thynge enclyned to is
Hath his kyndely stede
That seweth it without drede
That kyndly the manerynne
Of euery speche of euery soun
Be it eyther soule or fayre
Hath his kynde place in eyre
And syth that euery thynge ywys
Out of his kynde place ywys
Moueth thyder for to go (:):)
If it away be therfro
As I haue before proued the
It seweth euery soune perde
Moueth kyndely to pace
As vp in to his kynde place
And this place of whiche I tel
There as Fame lyst to dwel
Is set a myddes of these thre
Heuen/erthe/and eke the see
As most conseruatyfe the soun
Than is this the conclusyoun (:):)
That euery speche of euery man
As I the tel first began
Moueth vp on heyght to pace
Kyndly to Fames place
Tel me this nowe sayth fully
Haue I not proued thus symply
Without any subtylte
Of speche/or great prolyxite
Of termes of Philosophre
Of figures of Poetrie (:(:):)
Or colours of rethorike
Pere it ought the to lyke
For harde langage/and harde matere
Is encombrous for to here
At ones/wost thou not wel this
And I answered and sayd yes
Ah ha (quod he) so so I can
Lerely vnto a lerde man
Speke/and shewe hym suche skyles
That he may shake hem by the tyles
So palpable they shulden be
But tel me this nowe prey I the
Howe thynketh the my conclusyon
A good persuasyon
(Quod I) it is and lyke to be
Right so as thou hast proued me
By god (quod he) and as I leue
Thou shalte haue yet or it be eue
Of euery worde of this sentence
A proef/by experyence
And with thyne eares herey wel
Loppe and taple/and euerydel
That euery worde that spoken is
Cometh in to Fames house ywis
As I haue sayd/what wylte thou more
And with this worde vpper to fore
He began/and sayd by saynt Jame
Nowe wyl we speke al of game
Howe farest thou nowe (quod he) to me
Wel (quod I) nowe se (quod he)
By thy trouth ponde adowne
Where that thou knowest any towne
Or house/or any other thynge
And whan thou hast of aught knowynge
Lose that thou warne me
And I anone shal tel the
Howe farre that thou arte nowe therfro
And I adowne gan to loken tho
And beheelde feldes and playns
Nowe hylles/and nowe mountaynes
Nowe valeys/ and nowe forestes
And nowe vnneth great bestes
Nowe ryuers/nowe lakes
Nowe townes/nowe great trees
Nowe shippes sayllynge in the see
But thus soone in a whyle he
Was flowen fro the grounde so hye
That al the worlde as to myne eye
No more semed than a pricke
Or elles was the eyre so thycke
That I might it not discerne
With that he spake to me so yerne
And sayd: Herst thou any token
Or aught/that in this worlde is spoken
I sayde nay/ No wonder is
(Quod he) for neuer halfe so hye as this
Nas Alexander of Macedon
Kyng: Ne of Rome kay Scipion
That sawe in dreame at poynt deuyse
Heuen and erthe/hel and paradyse
Ne the

Ne eke the wretche Dedalus
Ne his chylde nyce Icharus
That flewe so hye/that the hete
His wynges molte/and he fel wete
In mydde the see/and there he dreynte
For whom was made a great complaynte
Nowe tourne vpwarde (quod he) thy face
And beholde this large space
Of ye/ but lose that thou ne be
Adrad of hem that thou shalte se
For in this region certeyne
Dwelleth many a citezeyne
Of whiche speweth dan Plato
These ben the eyrysshe beestes so
And tho sawe I al the meyne
Bothe gone and also flye
Lo (quod he) caste vp thyne eye
Se ponder lo/the Galaxye
The whiche men clepe the mylky way
For it is whyte: And some persay
Calleth it Watlynge strete
That ones was brente with the hete
Whan the sonnes sonne the rede
That hyte Pheton wolde lede
Algate his fatheres carte/and gye
The carte horse gan wel espye
That he coude no gouernaunce
And gan for to lepe and praunce
And bere hym vp/and nowe downe
Tyl he sawe the Scorpiowne
Whiche that in heuen a sygne is yet
And he for fere lost his wyt
Of that/and let the reynes gone
Of his horse/and they anone
Soone vp to mounte/and downe discende
Tyl bothe eyre and erthe brende
Tyl Jupiter so/at the last
Hym slewe/and fro the carte cast
Lo/ is it not a great myschaunce
To let a fole haue gouernaunce
Of thynges that he can not demayne
And with this worde sothe for to sayne
He gan alway vpper to sore
And gladed me than more and more
So sayth fully to me spake he
Tho gan I to loke vnder me
And beheld the eyrysshe beestes
Cloudes/mystes/and tempestes
Snowes/hayles/rayne/and wyndes
And the gret regne of her fyndes
Al the way thoughe whiche I came
O god (quod I) that made adam
Woche is thy myght and noblesse
And tho thought I vpon Dedes
That wryteth a thought may flye so hye
With fethers of philosophye
To passen cercle & element
And whan he hath so farre ywent
Than may he seen behynde his backe
Lyonce and erthe/and al that I of spake
Tho gan I wexe in a were
And sayd/I wote wel I am here
But whether in body or in goost
I not ywys/but god thou woost
For more clere entendement
Nas me neuer yet ysent
And than thought I on Marcyan
And eke of Anticlaudian
That sothe was her descripcion
Of al the heuens regyon
As farre as that I sawe the preue
And therfore I can hem leue
With that the Egle gan to crye
Let be (quod he) thy fantasye
Wyte thou lest of fierres ought
Naye certaynly (quod I) right nought
And why (quod he) for I am olde
Or elles wolde I the haue tolde
(Quod he) the fierres names lo
And al the heuens sygnes to
And whiche they be: Nay soth (quod I)
Yes perde (quod he) wost thou why
For whan thou redest poetry
How the goddes can stellify
Hyde/fysshe/or hyre/or her
As the Rauyn and other
Or Arriones harpe fyne
Castor/Polepe/or Delphyne
Or Athalantes doughters seuen
How al these are set in heuen
For thoughe thou haue hem ofte in hande
Yet nost thou nat where they stande
Nor force (quod I) it is no nede
As wel I leue so god me spede
Hem that wryten of this matere
As though I knewe her places here

And

And eke thy sclaundry here so dyuyght
It shulde shrenden al my syght
To loke on hem/that may wel be
(Quod he) and so soothe dare he me
A whyle/and tho begun to crye
That nuncz herde I thynge so hye
Holde vp thyne herd/for al is wel
Hayst thu pay lo/ houne hostel
Se here the house of Fame so
Wayst thou not here that I do
What (quod I) the great swowne
(Quod he) that combleth vp and downe
In Fames house ful of tydynges
Bothe of fayre speche and chydynges
And of falsed/ and soothe compouned
Herken wel it is not to vnsed
Herest thou not the great swough
Yes perde (quod I) wel ynough
And what soune is it lyke (quod he)
Peter/ lyke the beatynge of the se
(Quod I) agaynst the rockes holowe
Whan tempestus doune her shyppes swalowe
And that a man shande out of doute
A myle thens/and here it route
Or elles lyke the rumblynge
After the clappe of a thundrynge
Whan Ioues hath the eyre pocte
But it dothe me for feare swete
Nay/drede the not therof (quod he)
It is no thynge that wyl dysten the
Thou shalte haue no harme truely
And with that worde bothe he and I
As vyghe the place aryued were
As men myght caste with a spere
I myste fo we/ but in a strete
He set me fayre on my fete
And sayd/walke forth a pace
And tel thyne aduenture and cace
That thou shalte synde in Fames place
Now we (quod I) whyle we haue space
To speke/or that I go fro the
For the loue of god tel me
In soothe/that I wyl of the lere
If this noyse that I here
Be as I haue herde the tel
Of folke/that dwellen in this dwel
And comen here in the same wyse
As I the harde or this deuyse
And that here lyues body nys
In al that house that ronder is
That maketh al this soude fere
No (quod he) by sayne Clere
And also wysse god rede me
But o thynge I wyl warne the
Of the whiche thou wylte haue wonder
Lo/ to the house of Fame ponder
Thou wost how we cometh euery speche
It nedeth not the eyre to teche
But vnderstande now wel this
Whan any speche ypronyed is
Vp to the palays anone right
It weyeth fyre the same wyght
Whiche that the worde in eyrhe spake
Be he clothed in reed or blake
And hath so very his lykenesse
And spake the worde that thou wylte gesse
That it the same body be
Man or woman/he or she
And is not this a wonder thynge
Yes (quod I tho) by heuen kynge
And with this worde/farewel (quod he)
And here wyl I abyde the
And god of heuen sende the grace
Some good to lerne in this place
And I of hym to be leue anone
And gan forthe to the palays gone.

¶ Explicit liber secundus.

O Dd of science and of lyght
Apollo throughe thy great myght
This spel I am bone now the gyue
Not that I wyl for maystrye
Here arte poetycal be shewde
But for the ryme is lyght and lewde
Wel make it somwhat agreable
Though some verse fayle in a syllable
And that I do no diligence
To shewe crafte/but sentence
And if deuyne vertue thou
Wylte helpe me to shewe now
That in my herd ymarked is
Lo/ that is for to meanen this
The house of Fame for to discryue
Thou shalte se me go as blyue
Vnto the nexte laurer I se
And hyde it/ for it is thy tree

Nowe entre in my brest anone
Whan I was from the Egle gone
I gan beholde vpon this place
And certayne or I further pace
I wol you al the shappe deuyse
Of house and cyte/ and al the wyse
Howe I gan to this place aproche
That stode vpon so hye a roche
Hyer standeth none in Spayne
But vp I clambe with moche payne
And though to clymbe greued me
Yet I ententyfe was to se
And for to pouren wonder lo w
Yf I coude any wyse vnknowe
What maner stone this roche was
For it was lyke a lymed glas
But that it shone ful more clere
But of what congeled matere
It was/ I nyste redely
But at the laste espyed I
And fonde that it was entrydele
A roche of yse and nat of stele
Thought I/ by saynt Thomas of Kent
This were a feble foundement
To bylden on a place hye
He ought him selfe to glorifye
That heron bylte/ god so me saue
Tho sawe I al the hal ygraue
With famous folkes names fele
That had ben in moche wele
And hir fames wyde yblowe
But wel vnneth myght I knowe
Any letters for to rede
Hir names by/ for out of drede
They weren almost of thawed so
That of the letters one or two
Were molte alwaye of euery name
So vnfamous was wexe hir fame
But men saye/ what may euer laste
Tho gan I pyn myne herte caste
That they were molte alwaye for hete
And nat alway with stormes bete
For on that other syde I sey
Of this hyl/ that northwarde ley
Howe it was writen ful of names
Of folke that had afore great fames
Of olde tyme/ and yet they were
As fresshe as men had written hem there
The selfe day/ or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure
But wel I wyst what it made
It was conserued with the shade
Al the writyng that I sye
Of a Castel that so stode on hye
And stode eke in so colde a place
That heate myght it nat deface
Tho gan I on this hyl to gone
And founde on the coppe a wone
That al the men that ben on lyue
Ne han the connyng to discryue
The beaute of that yfere place
Ne coude caste no compace
Suche another for to make
That myght of beaute be his make
Ne so wonderly ywrought
That it astonyeth yet my thought
And maketh al my wytte to swynke
On this Castel for to thynke
So that the great beaute
The caste/ craefte/ and curiosyte
Ne can I nat to you deuyse
Myn wytte ne may me nat suffyse
But natheles al the substaunce
I haue yet in my remembraunce
For whyl me thought by saynt Gyle
Al was of stone of Beryle
Both the castel and the tour
And eke the hal/ and euery bour
Without peres or iopardyes
But many subtel compassynges
As babewries and pynnacles
Imageries and tabernacles
I sawe / and ful eke of wyndowes
As flakes fallen in great snowes
And eke in eche of the pynacles
Were fonde habytacles
In whiche stoden al without
Ful the castel al about
Of al maner of mynstrales
And iestours that tellen tales
Both of wepyng and of game
And of al that longeth vnto fame
There herde I play on an harpe
That so swete both wel and sharpe
That Orpheus ful craftely
And on this syde faste by

Hette the harpers Orion
And Glauce Cheron
And other harpers many one
And the Dutch Glaspasone
And small harpers with her glees
That vnder hem in hyrnes sees
And gon on hem vp warde to gape
And counterfaiten hem as an ape
Or as craft counterfeyte kynde
Tho sawe I standen hem behynde
A farre from hem/al by hem selue
Many a thousande tymes twelue
That made so wode mynstralcyes
In commune and shalmyes
And many an other pype
That craftely began to pype
Dothe in doubed and in rede
That wery at ferste with the blede
And many a floyte and lytlynge horne
And pypes made of grene corne
As haue these lytel herde gromes
That kepen bestes in the bromes
There sawe I thay dan Lytherne
And of Athenes dan Proserine
And Hermia that lost her tyme
Bothe in face/body/and rhyme
For that she wolde enuyen/so
To pypen bette than Apollo
There sawe I eke famous olde and yonge
Pypers of al the dutche tonge
To lerne loue daunces/syrynges
Reyes/and the straunge thynges
Tho sawe I in another plas
Standynge in a large spac
Of hem that maken body soun
In trumpe bemé/and clarioun
For in fyght and blode shedynges
Is vsed gladly clarionynges
There herde I trumpe Chessenus
Of whom that speketh Vergilius
There herde I Joab trumpe also
Theodomas and other mo
And al that vsed clarion
In Castelonyne/and Aragon
That in her tymes famous were
To lerne falle I trumpery there
There sawe I yet in other rees
Playenge vpon other sondry gleos
Whiche that I can not nemne
Tho they stooden hem by semne
Of whiche I nyl as nowe not ryme
For ease of you/and losse of tyme
For tyme passed/this knowe ye
By no way may recouered be
There sawe I playenge iogelours
Magicians and tregetours
And Phetonysses charmeresses
Olde wytches sorceresses
That vsen expirimentes
And eke subfumigationes
And clerkes eke whiche conne wel
Al this magyke naturel
That craftely do her ententes
To maken in certayne apparentes
Ymages so/though whiche magyke
To maken a man hen hole or sike
There sawe I the queene Medea
And Cyrces eke/and Calliopha
There sawe I Hermes Ballenus
Pygote/and eke Hymon Magus
There sawe I/and knewe by name
That by suche arte done men haue fame
There sawe I Coll tregetour
Vpon a table of Sycamour
Play an vncouthe thynge to tell
I sawe hym carp a wynde mel
Vnder a walnote shale
What shulde I make longer tale
Of al the people that I sey
I coude not tel tyl domesdey
When I had al this folke beholde
And founde me loce and nat holde
And I amused a longe whyle
Vpon this wal of Beryle
That shone sygtier than a glas
And made wel more than it was
As bynde thyng of fame is
And thay anon after this
I gan soothe romen tyl I fonde
The castel yate on my right honde
Whiche so wel corven was
That neuer suche another nas
And yet it was by auenture
Ywrought ful greate and subtyl cure
It nedeth not you more to telle
To make you to longe dwelle

Of these pates sloppe shynges
Ne of compaces/ne of sharpynges
Ne how we the harde pynge in masonries
As corbettes/and ymageries
But lorde so fayre it was to shewe
For it was al with golde bedewe
But in I wente/and that anone
There mette I crepynge many one
A larges a larges/holde vp wel
God saue the lady of this pel
Our owne gentyl lady Fame
And hem that wylleth to haue a name
Of her/thus herde I crye al
And fast comen out of the hal
And those nobles and fayrynges
And crowned were as kynges
With crownes wrought ful of losynges
And many tibans/and many frynges
Were on her clothes truely
Tho at the last espyed I
That pursuauntes and herandes
That crye riche folkes laudes
Al werey/ al and euery man
Of hem/as I you tel can
Had on hym tho we a vesture
Whiche men clepe a cote armure
Embroudred wonderly riche
As thoughe they were not yliche
But naught wyl I so mote I thryue
Be about to descryue
Al these armes that there were
That they thus on her cotes were
For it to me were unpossyble
Wen myght make of hem a bylle
Twenty yere thyder as I trowe
For certayne who so coude knowe
Wyght there al the armes seen
Of famous folke that had been
In Assrike/Europe/and Asye
Dithe fryst began chevalrye
Lo/ howe shulde I nowe tel al this
Ne of the hal eke what nede is
To tellen you that euery wal
Of it/and rose and flowe with al
Was plated halfe a foote thicke
Of golde/and that nas not wycke
But for to prouue in al wyse
As fyne as ducket in Venyse
Of whiche to lyte al in my pouche is
And they were set as thyck of nayles
Fyne/of the fynest stones sayle
That men troen in the lapidayre
Or as grasse growen in a mede
But it were al to longe to rede
The names/and therfore I pace
But in thus lusily and rychе place
That Fames hal called was
Ful mochе prees of folke there nas
Ne croudynge/for to mochе preas
Out al on hye aboue a deas
Sette in a see imperyal
That made was of a Rubye royal
Whiche that a carbuncle is yclepid
I sawe perpetually ystepid
A semelyne creature
That neuer formed by nature
Was suche another thynge I sey
For alther fyrst/sothe to sey
Me thought that she was so lyte
That the length of a cubyte
Was lenger than she semed be
But thus soone in a whyle she
Her selfe tho wonderly strengthe
That with her fete she therthe strenghte
And with her hed she touched heuen
There as shyneth the fyrrey seuen
And thereto pet/as to my wyt
I sawe a great wonder yet
Upon her eyen to beholde
But certaynly I them neuer tolde
For as fele eyen had she
As fethers upon foules be
Or weren on the bestes foure
That goddes throne can honoure
As wryteth Johan in the Apocalype
Her here that was ouwdy and cryspe
As burned golde it shone to se
And sothe to telle eke also she
Had also fele up standynge eares
And tonges/as on bryst ben heares
And on her fete wopen sawe I
Partryche wynges trewly
But lorde the perry and the ryches
I sawe sytynge on the goddesse
And the heuenly melody
Of songes ful of armony

I sette

I herde aboute her trone ſyngē
That al the paleys walt ronge
So ſongē the mynſtrēs thāſe ſhe
That cleped is Caliope
And her ſeuen ſyſterne alſo
That in hyr facen famen maſte
And euermore eternally
The ſonge of fame tho herde I
Herped be thou and thy name
Goddes of renoun and of fame
Tho was I ware at the laſt
As I myne eyen gan vp caſt
That this ylke noble quene
On her ſhulderes gan ſuſteine
Both the armes and the name
Of tho that had large fame
Alyſander/and Hercules
That with a fyrste hys lyfe dyd leſe
And thus ſtounde I ſpeynge this goddeſſe
In noble honour and rycheſſe
Of whych ſh ſtode a whyle no we
Other thynge entitlen you
Tho ſawe I ſtande on tother ſyde
Stretyght do wne to the doune wyde
Iron the bene many a pylere
Of metal/that ſtode not ful clere
Out thoughe they were of no richeſſe
Yet were they made for great noblēſſe
And in hem great ſentence
And folke of hye and bigge ſtature
Of whyche to tel wyl I fonde
Vpon a pylere ſawe I ſtonde
Alderfirſt there I ſpe
Vpon a pylere ſtande my ſpe
That was of lede and of yron fyne
Hym of the ſtate fatturyne
The Ebrayke Ioſephus the olde
That of wruen gyſtes tolde
And he bare on his ſhulders hye
The fame vp of the Iurye
And by hym ſtoden other fourē
Vyſe and worthy for to neuen
To helpen hym bere vp the charge
It was ſo heuy and ſo large
And for they myſtery of hiſtorie
As wel as of other memorie
Therfore was in this pylere
Of whyche I now telleth

Of lede and yron ſothe yſame
For yron ſhewith mortal ſe
Whyche that gaden of batayle
And the lede wdhouten fayle
Is ſo/the metal of Saturne
That hath ful large wheele to turne
To ſtande forthe on eyther rowe
Of hem/whyche I coude ſnowe
Thoughe I by order hem not tel
To make you to longe to dwel
Theſe/of whyche I gan rede
There ſawe I ſtande out of drede
Vpon an yron pylere ſtronge
That paynted was al endlonge
With Ipgres blode in euery place
The Theſeſon that hygh Stace
That bare of Thebes vp the name
Vpon his ſhulders/and the fame
Alſo of cruel Achylles
And by hym ſtode withouten reſe
Ful wonder hygh vpon a pylle
Of yron/he the great Omer
And with hym Dares and Tytus
Before/and eke he Tollyus
And Guydo eke de Colempnis
And Engliſſhe Galfride eke ywis
And whe of theſe as I haue ſope
Was buſy to bere vp Lrope
So heuy therof was the fame
That for to bere it was no game
Out yet I gan ful wel eſpye
Byt were hem was a lytel vnrye
Dne ſayd that Omer made hem
Iryngyng in his poetrie
And was to the Grekes fauourable
Therfore holde he it but fable
Tho ſawe I ſtande on a pylere
That was of ſyuned yron clere
The latyn poete Vergyle
That hath bore vp a longe whyle
The fame of Eneas
And nexte hym on a pylere lene
Of copper/Dene clerke Ouyde
That hath ſo wyde wonderes wryte
The great god of lones fame
And there he ſtode vp wel his name
Vpon this pylere alſo hye
As I myghte ſe at mine eye

For why this hal wherin I rede
Was wrye on heyght/length/and brede
Wel more by a thousande cobe
Than it was erst/that sawe I wele
Tho sawe I on a pylter by
Of yron wrought ful sturdily
The great poete dan Lucan
That on his shoulders bare vp than
An hye as that Impaft he
The fame of Julyus and Pompee
And vp hym stoden al the clerkes
That write of Romes mighty werkes
That if I wolde her names tel
Al to longe must I dwel
And nexte hym on a pylter stode
Of Dulphus/lyche as he were wode
Dan Claudyan/lothe for to tel
That bare vp al the fame of hel
Of Pluto/ and of Proserpyne
That quenes of the derke pyne
What shulde I more tel of thys
The hal was al ful pauys
Of hem that wryten olde tydes
As ben on trees rokes nestes
But it a fui confuse maistre
Were al thise resles for to herre
That they of wryte/and how we they spyke
But whyle that I beholde thus spyke
I herde a noyse approchen blyue
That ferth as doth a swerde doute ryue
Agayns his tyme of out flyenge
Right suche a manere murmur ryse
For al the worlde it semed me
Tho gan I loke aboute and se
That there come entrynge in to the hal
A right great company withal
And that of sondry regyons
Of al tynes condycyons
That dwel in erthe vnder the moone
Poore and rych/and also soone
As they were come in to the hal
They gan on knees to wirshe to fal
Before this ilke noble quene
And sayde/graunt vs lady shene
Ethe of vs of thy grace alone
And some of hem she graunted soone
And some she warned wel and fayre
And some she granted the contrayre
Of her asyynge wythe
But this I say you trewly
What her grace was I nyste
For of these folke ful wel I wyste
They had good fame/ne desserued
Al thoughe they were dyuersly serued
Right as her syster dame Fortune
Is wonte to serue in commune
Now wel herkyn how she gan to pepe
Hem that gan her of grace praye
And yet lo/ al this company
Seyden sothe/and not a lye
Madame sayd they/we be
Folke that here beseche the
That thou graunt vs now good fame
And let our workes fame good name
In ful recompensacyon
Of good wylle/ grue vs good renoun
I warne it you (quod she) anone
We gete of me good fame none
By god/and therfore go your way
Alas (quod they) and welaway
Tel vs what youre cause may be
For me lyste it not (quod she)
No wyght shal speke of you thyng
Good ne harme/ne that ne thynk
And with that worde she gan to call
Her messenger that was in hal
And bad that he shulde fast gone
Vpon payne to be hanged anone
For Eolus the god of wynde
In Trace there fast hym fynde
And byd hym blynge his clarioun
That is ful dyuers of his sowne
And it is cleped fame Laude
With whiche he wont is to herande
Hem that me lyst yplesed be
And also byd hym how that he
Bringe ete his other instrument
That hight Detraccyon in entent to lowe
With whiche he wont is to dyffame
Hem that me lyst and do hem shame
This messenger gan fast to gone
And sounde where in a cornes of stone
In a countre that hight Trace
Thus Eolus with harde grace
Helde the wyndes in distresse
And gan hem vnder hym to presse

That they goue us this fame vnto
Se bounde and pay it them so soone
This messengre gan fast crye
Vpsit vp (quod he) and fast thee hye
Lyst thou of my soup be
And take thy trumpe eke with the
And speede the fast and be anone
Rode to one thou Eyolus Triton
Hys clarions to sherpthe
And let a certayne wynde go
That blowe so hydously and hye
That it ne lefte not a skye
In al the welken longe and brode
This Eolus no where abode
Lyst he were rome to fames sete
And eke the mayn that it sholde kepe
And there he stode as styl as stone
And here withal there rome anone
Another huge noyse and crye
Of good folke and gan to crye
Lady/graunt vertuous good fame
And let our workes haue that name
Lo we ny honour of gentylesse
And also god poure soule blesse
For we haue well deserued it
Therfore is right that we be quyt
As thyne I (quod she) ye shal seyde
Good workes shal you not anoyde
To haue of me good fame as ye
But wote ye what/I graunt yow
That ye shal haue a shrewde name
And wycked fame/and worse fame
Thoughe ye good foos haue wel deserued
Lo we gothe your way for ye ben ferued
And thou thou Eolus (quod she)
Take soothe thy trumpe anone let se
That is pierced Belcombre lyght
And blow me hem shame/that euery wyght
Speke of hem harme and shrewdnesse
In stede of good and worthynesse
For thou shalte trumpe al the contrayre
Of that they haue done/wel or fayre
Alas thought I what auentures
Haue these fayre creatures
That they amonge al the peers
Shul be thus by shamed goddes
But what/it must nedes be
What bad this Eolus/but he
Tok out his blacke trumpe of bras
That fouler than the deuyl was
And gan thus trumpe for to blowe
As al the worlde sholde ouerthrowe
Throughout euery regyon
Went this foule trumpes sown
As swyfte as a pellet out of a gonne
Whan fyre is in the pouder ronne
And smoke gan out wende
Out of the foule trumpes ende
Blacke/blo/grenysshe/swartysshe eke
As doothe where that men melte leke
Lo/al on fyre from the tewel
And therto one shynge fawe I wel
That the ferther that it ranne
The greter weyen it began
As doothe the ryuer from a well
And it stanke as the pytte of hel
Alas/thus was her shame prynge
And gyltlesse on euery tonge
Tho came the thirde company
And gon vp to the dore to hye
And do wne on knees they fel anon
And sayden/we ben euerychon
Folke that han ful trewly
Deserued fame rightfully
And prayde you it might be knowe
Right as it is/and forthe blowe
I graunt (quod she) for now me lyste
That your good workes shal be wyste
And yet ye shal haue better loos
Right in dispyte of al your foos
Than worthy is/and that anone
Lette now me (quod she) thy trumpe gone
Thou Eolus/that art so blacke
And out thyne other trumpe take
That hyght Laude/and blow me it so
That through the worlde her fame go
Al euenly and not to fast
That it be knowen at the last
Ful gladly body myn he sayde
And out his trumpe of golde he brayde
Anon/and sette it to his mouthe
And blewe it est/west/and southe
And northe/as loude as any thonder
That euery wyght hath of it wonder
So hidde it ryn or that it stynt
And certes al the hoste that went
Out of the trumpes mouthe sowde
As men o pelte ful of beanes shulde

Amonge a baſſet ful of roſes
This fauour dyd he to her loſes
And right with this I gan eſpy
There came the fourth company
But certayne they were wonder fewe
And gonne to ſtanden on a rewe
And ſayden/certes lady ſwete
We haue done wel with al our myght
But we ne hope to haue fame
Hyde our workes and our name
For goddes loue/for certes we
Haue ſurely done it for bounte
And for no maner other thyng
I graunt you al your aſkyng
(Quod ſhe) let your workes be deed
With that aboute I tourned my heed
And ſawe anon the fyfte route
That to this lady gan loute
And do wine on knees anon to fal
And to her tho beſoughten al
To hyden her good werkes eke
And ſayd/they preue nat a leke
For no fame/ne ſuche renoun
For they for contemplacioun
And goddes loue had it wrought
Ne of fame wolde they nought
What (quod ſhe) and be ye woode
And were ye for to do good
And for to haue of that no fame
Haue ye diſpyte to haue my name
Nay ye ſhal lyen everychone
Blowe thy trumpe and that anone
(Quod ſhe) thou Eolus I hote
And ryng theſe folkes workes by note
That al the worlde may of it here
And he gan blowe hem loos ſo clere
In his golden clarioun
That through the worlde went the ſoun
Al ſo ſwythly/and eke ſo faſte
That their fame was blowe a faſte
Tho came the fyfte compayne
And gan faſt to fame crye
Right verily in this maner
They ſayden/mercy lady derr
To tel certayne as it is
We haue done tayther that ne this
But ydel al out lyfe hath be
But natheleſſe yet preye we
That we may fame as good a ſoun
And great renoun and honour wynne
As they that haue do moſt for ſinne
And aſkyng al her queſtes
As wel of ſame as other thynge
Al was he never more ne lenge
Ne elſe what fro worldly ſmut
Ne ones in her herte ymaint
To maken hem onely frendly chere
But mought tayen hem on here
Yet let hem to the people ſeme
Suche as they were lyke may of ſe deme
That worldly louen hem for woode
It ſhal do hem as muche good
And to our herte as muche eaſyng
The counterpeyſe eaſe/and traueyle
As we had won with labour
For that is dere bought honour
At regarde of our great eaſe
And yet ye muſte be more pleaſe
Let hem be holde eke therto
Worthy/wyſe/and good alſo
And ryche/and happy lyke to ſeme
For goddes loue that ſytteth aboue
Though we may nat the body ſeme
Of worldly/yet ſo god me ſpeme
Lette men glewe on hem the name
Suffyſeth that we haue the fame
I graunt (quod ſhe) by my trouthe
Now Eolus withouten ſlouthe
Take out thy trumpe of golde (quod ſhe)
And blowe as they haue aſked me
That every may were hem at eaſe
Though they go my ful badde treſe
This Eolus gan it ſo blowe
That through the worlde it was yknowe
Tho came the ſeuenth route anon
And fyl on knees everychon
And ſayd/lady graunt us ſoone
The ſame thyng/the ſame boone
That this nexte folke haue done
Fyrſt you (quod ſhe) vnrychoun
Ye maiſty ſwyne/ye pdel wretches
Ful of rotey ſlowe tetches
What falſe thewes/where ye wolde
Ben famed good/and nothyng nolde
Deſerue why/ne neuer thought
They rather you to hangen aught
For ye be lyke the ſlopy latte
That wolde haue fyſſh but lyttel ſkath

The trad nothyng lyste his clappes
Fast thaste come to yeres lappes
And oh myne ij Jf graunt
Or do fauour yen to graunt
Thou Eolus thou kyng of Trace
Go blowe thy fole a fayr grace
(Quod she) anon/and neuer thou lowe
As I shal tel the ryght nowe
Nay thefte ben they that wolde honoure
Haue/and do no kynes labour
Le do me good/and yet haue laude
And that men wende that Belle Jfaude
Le conde hem nat of loue werne
And yet she that gryet at querne
Je al to good to ease her herte
Then Eolus auoy vp sterte
And with his blacke clarioun
He gan to blasen out a soun
As lounde as dothe wynde in hel
And eke therwith sothe to tel
This fowne was so ful of vapes
As euer mo were here in apes
And that went al the worlde aboute
That euery wight gan on hem shoute
And for to laugh as they were wode
Suche game founde they in her fode
Tho came another company
That had ydone the treachery
The harme and great wickednesse
That any herte couden gesse
And prayed her to haue good fame
And that she nolde do hem no shame
But graue hem soos and good renoun
And do it blowe in clarioun
Nay wys (quod she) it were a vyce
Al be I nat in mine vsyce
Be I yet nat to do it nowe
Le thou I nyl graunt it yow
Tho come there flappyng in a route
And gan clappen al aboute
Euery man vpon the crowne
That al the hall gan to sowne
And sayd/lady lefe and dere
We ben suche folkes as ye may here
To tel al the tale a ryght
We ben shrewes euery wyght
And haue delyte in wickednesse
As good folke haue in goodnesse
And hope to be holden shrewes
And ful of vyce and wicked thewes
Wherfore we praye you on a to vs
That our fame be suche yblowe vs
In al thing ryght as it is
I graunt it you (quod she) ywis
But what arte thou that sayest this tale
That wearest on thy hose a pale
And on thy typpet suche a bel
Madame (quod he) sothe to tel
I am that yiue shrewes ywis
That brent the temple of Mydis
In Athenes/so that cyte
And wherfore dyddest thou so (quod she)
By my trouthe (quod he) madame
I wolde fayne haue had a name
As other folke had in the towne
Although they were of great renowne
For her vertue and her thewes
Thought I/as great fame haue shrewes
(Though it be naught) for shrewdnesse
As good folke haue for goodnesse
And sythen I may nat haue that one
That other nyl I nat forgone
As for to get a fame here
The temple sette I al on fyre
Lo we don our foos be blowe swythe
As wyssly be thou euer blythe
Gladly (quod she) thou Eolus
Herest thou not what they prayen vs
Madame yes/ful wel (quod he)
And I wyl trumpen it parde
And to be his blacke trumpe fast
And gan to puffen and to blaste
Tyl it was at the worldes ende
With that I gan aboute wende
For one that stode right at my backe
Me thought ful goodly to me spake
And sayd/frende what is thy name
Arte thou come hyder to haue fame?
Nay for sothe frende (quod I)
I come nat hyther grant mercy
For no suche cause by my heed
Suffyseth me/as I were deed
That no wight haue my name in honde
I wotte my selfe best how we I stonde
For what I dide/or what I thynke
I wol my selfe al it dunke
Certayne for the more parte
As ferforthe as I can myn arte

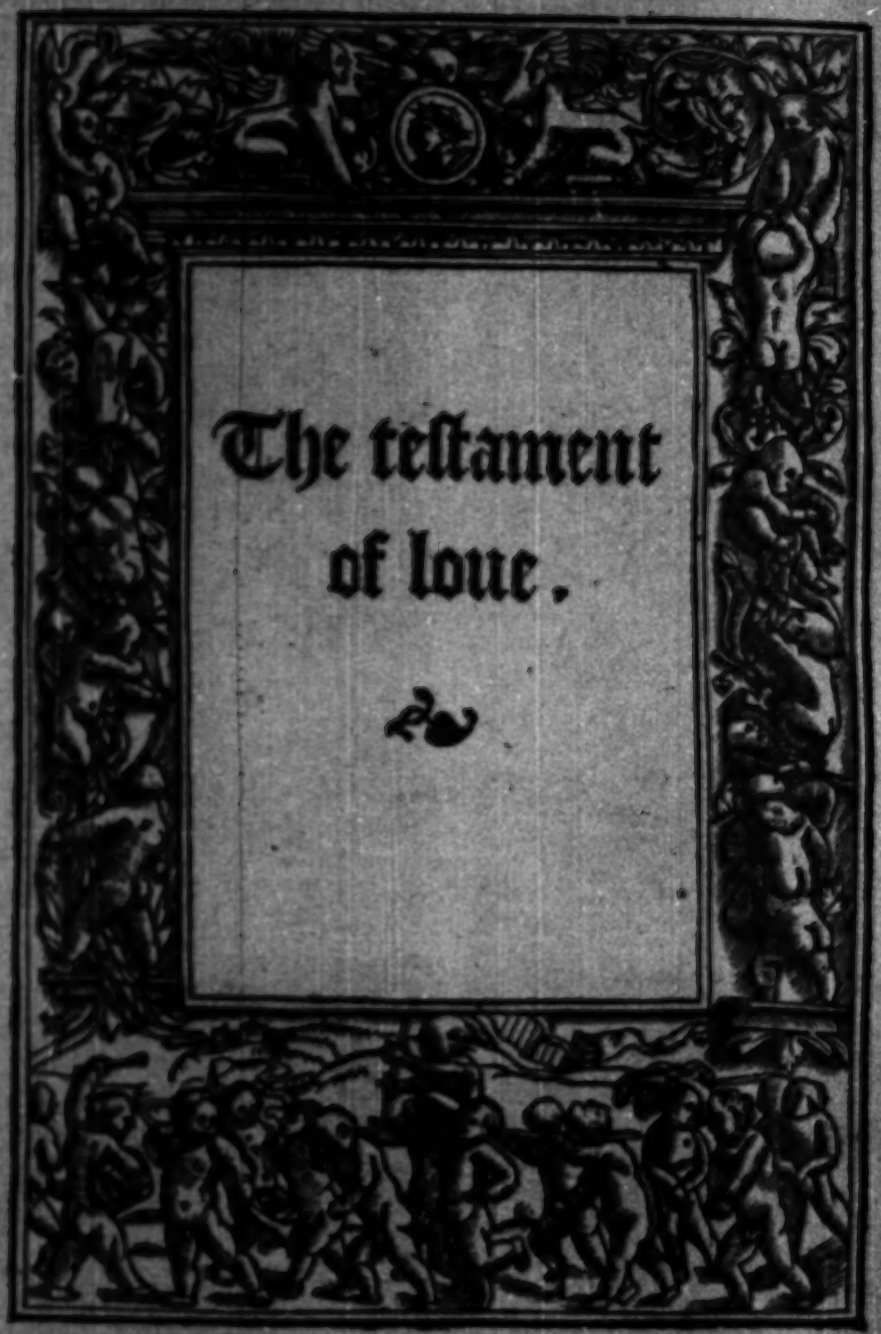
Who

What doest thou here than (quod he)
(Quod I) that wol I tel the
The cause why I stande here
Some newe tydynges for to lere
Some newe thyng I not what
Tydinges eyther this or that
Of loue/or suche thynges glade
For certaynly he that me made
To come hyder/sayd to me
I shulde bothe here and se
In this place wonder thynges
But these be no suche tidynges
As I ment of: No (quod he)
And I answerde/no parde
For wel I wote euer yet
Sythe that first I had wyt
That some folke han despred fame
Diuersly/and loos and name
But certaynly I nyst howe
Ne where that Fame dwelleth now
Ne eke of her dyscryption
Ne also her condycion
Ne the order of her dome
knowe I nat tyl I hyder come
Why than be so these tydynges
That thou nowe hyther bringes
That thou haste herde (quod he) to me
But nowe no force/for wel I se
What thou desyrest for to lere
Come forthe and stande no lenger here
And I wol the without drede
In to suche another place lede
There thou shalt here many one
Tho gan I forthe with him gone
Out of the castel forthe to fey
Tho sawe I stande in a valey
Vnder the castel faste by
An house/that domus Dedaly
That Laborintus ycleped is
Nas made so wonderly ywys
Ne halfe so queyntly ywrought
And euermo/as swyfte as thought
This queynt house aboute went
That neuermo it styl stent
And there came out so great a noyse
That had it stonde vpon Oyse
Wey might haue herde it rasely
To Rome/I trowe ryserly
And the noyse whiche that I herde
For al the worlde right so it ferde
In bothe the rouyng of the stone
That fro thangyn is hyder gone
And al this house of whiche I rede
Was made of twyggen fans we rede
And grene eue/and some were whyte
Suche as men to these cages tuhyte
Or maden of these panyers
Or eke hutches or bossens
That for the swough and for the twyggen
This house was also ful of gyggen
And also ful eke of chyrkynges
And of many other wonkynges
And eke this house hath of entrees
As many as leues ben on trees
In somer whan they ben grene
And on the rofe yet men may sene
A thousande holes/and wel mo
To letten the sowne out go
And by day in euery tyde
Ben al the doores open wyde
And by nyght eche one vnshette
Ne porte in there none to lette
No maner tydinges in to pace
Ne neuer rest is in that place
That it nys fylled ful of tydynges
Eyther loude or of whyspervnges
And euer al the houses angles
Be ful of rownynges and of iangles
Of werres/of peace/of marryages
Of rest/of labour of viages
Of abode of deth/and of lyf:
Of sone/of late/of wrothe/of stryf
Of losse/of lore/and of wynnynges
Of heale/of sickenesse/or of lesynges
Of faire wether/and eke of tempestes
Of qualme of folke/and of bestes
Of dyuers transmutacions
Of estates/and eke of regnes
Of trust/of drede/of ialousy
Of wyte/of wrongyng/of folsy
Of plente/and of great famyne
Of chepe/of derth/and of ruyne
Of good or misgouernement
Of pes/and of dyuers accident
And lo/this house of whiche I write
Syker be ye it nas not lyte
For it was syxty myle of length
Al was the tymber of no strength
Yet

Yet it is founded to endure
Wyfe that vſyth to Auenture
That is the mother of tydynges
As the ſire of welles and ſpringes
And it was ſhapen ſyth a cage
Certes (quod I) in al myn age
Sy ſawe I ſuche an houſe as this
And as I wondred me ywis
Upon this houſe/tho ware was I
How myne Egle faſte by
Was perched fyrſt vpon a ſtone
and I gan ſtraight to hym gone
And ſayd thus/I pray the
That thou a whyle abyde me
Jor grodes loue/and let me ſene
What wonders in that place bene
Jor pet peraunter I may lere
Some good therin/or ſom what here
That lere me were/or that I went
Peter/that is no we myn entent
(Quod he to me) therfore I dwel
But certaynly one thyng I the tel
That but I bunge the therin
Sy ſhal thou neuer comme the gyn
To come in to it/out of doute
So faſte it whyrleth ſo aboute
But ſythe that Jouys of his grace
As I haue ſayd/wyl the ſolace
Finally with theſe thynges
Vncouthe ſyghtes and tidynges
To paſſe with thyne heuynesſe
Suche routhe hath he of thy diſtreſſe
That thou ſuffredeſt debonairly
And woſte thy ſelues vtterly
Deſperate of al blyſſe
Sythe that fortune hath made a myſſe
The ſwote of al thyn hertes reſt
Langwyſſhe/and ete in poynte to breſt
But he thrugh his mygthe mercyte
Wyl do the eaſe/al be it lyte
And gaue in eyperſſe cõmaundement
To whyche I am obedyent
To ſoulther the with al my might
And wyſſe and teche the a right
Where thou mayſſe moſte tidynges here
Thou ſhalte here many one here
With this worde he right anone
And at a wyndowe in me brought
That in this houſe was/as me thought
And there withal me thought it ſtent
And nothyng it aboute went
And we ſette vs the ſloore adoun
But ſuche a great congregacioun
Of folke/as I ſawe come aboute
Some within and ſome without
Was neuer ſene/ne ſhal be eſte
That certes in this worlde nys leſte
So many ſoumed by nature
Ne derd ſo many a creature
That wel vnneth in that place
Had I a foote brede of ſpace
And euery wight that I ſawe there
Rowned euerych in others ere
A newe tidyng priuely
Or elſe it tolde al openly
Right thus/and ſayd: Herſt nat thou
That is be tydde/ſo right now
No (quod he) tel me what
And than he tolde him this and that
And ſwore therto/that it was ſothe
Thus hath he ſayd/and thus he dothe
And this ſhal be/and thus herde I ſay
That ſhal be founde/that dare I laye
That al the folke that is on lyue
Ne haue the conning to diſcryue
The tydynges that I herde there
What a ſoude/and what in ere
But al the wonder moſte was this
Whan one had herde a thyng ywis
He came ſtreyght to another wyght
And gan hym telle anon right
The ſame that hym was tolde
Or it a furlonge way was olde
And gan ſomwhat for to eche
To this tydyng in this ſpeche
More than euer it ſpoken was
And nat ſo ſone departed nas
Tho fro hym that he ne mette
With the thirde/and er he lette
Any ſtounde/he tolde hym alſe
Were the tydynges ſothe or falſe
Yet wolde he tel it natheles
And euer mo with more encreſes
Than it was erſt: thus north and ſouth
Went euery tydyng/fro mouthe to mouthe

And that encreasyng enermo
As fyre is wonte to quycken and go
From a sparcle spronge amys
Tyl al a cyte brent vp is
And whan that was ful vp sprongē
And wapen more on every tonge
Than euer it was/and went anone
Vp to a wyndowe out to gone
Or but it myght out there passe
It gan out crepe at some crenasse
And flewe forthe faste for the nones
And somtyme I sawe there at ones
A leasyng/ and a sadde sothe sawe
That gonnen of auenture drawe
Out at a wyndowe for to pace
And whan they metten in that place
They were a cherbed bothe two
And neyther of hem myght out go
For eche other they gonne so croude
Tyl eche of hem gan crycn loude
Let me goy furst/nay but let me
And here I wol ensuren the
With nones that thou wolte do so
That I shal neuer fro the go
But be thyn owne swone brother
We wol medale be eche in other
That no may be he neuer so wrothe
Shal haue one two/but bothe
At ones/ al beside his leue
Come we amorowe or oy eue
Be we cryde or styl yrowned
Thus sawe I false and sothe compowned
Togyder flye for o tydynge
Thus out at holes gonne wringe
Euery tydyng streyght to Fame
And she gan yeue eche his name
After her disposycion
And yeue hem ese duracion
Some to weye and wane soone
As dothe the fayre whyte moone
And set hem gone/thers myght I seen
Wynged wonders faste flyen
Twenty thousande in a route
As Eolus hem blewe aboute
And forde this house in al tymes
Was ful of flyenen and pylgrymes
With scrippes bretful of leasynges
Entremedled with tidynges
And ese alone by hem selue
O many thousande tymes twelue
Sawe I ese of these pardoners
Currours/and ese messangers
With bagen crōmed ful of lyes
As euer vessel was with pyes
And as I aither fastest went
Aboute/ and dyd al myn entent
Me for to playen and for to lere
And ese a tyding for to here
That I had herde of some countre
That shal nat nowe be tolde for me
For it no nede is redely
Folke can synge it bet than I
For al mote out late or rathe
Al the shewes in the rathe
I herde a great noyse withal
In a corner of the hal
There men of lowe tydynges tolde
And I gan thyderwarde beholde
For I sawe rennyng every wyght
As faste as that they hadden myght
And everyche cryde/what thing is that
And some sayd I not neuer what
And whan they were al oy an hepe
Tho behynde gonne vp lepe
And clamben vp on other faste
And vp the noyse on hyghen caste
And treden faste on others heles
And stampe as men don after eles
At the laste I sawe a man
Whiche that I naught ne can
But he semed for to be
A man of great auctorite
And therwithal I abrayde
Out of my slepe halfe a frayde
Remembling wel what I had seen
And how ye and seere I had been
In my goost/ and had great wonder
Of that the god of thonder
Had let me knowen/and began to write
Lyke as ye haue herde me endyte
Wherfore to studye and trete alway
I purpose to be day by day
Thus in dreamyng god my grace
Endeth this lytel boke of Fame.

¶ Here folowyth the Testament of Love.



The testament of loue.

Many men there ben/ that wil erre openly spead so moche swalowy the de ficioufneſſe of artes and of ryme/ by queynt inpty ting colours/ that of the goodneſſe or of the badneſſe of the sentence take they sykel hede or els none. Bowsely dul wytte and a thoughtful soule/ so sore haue myned and graffed in my spyrites/ that suche craft of endyting wol not ben of myn acquayntaice. And for rude wordes and boysteous percen the herte of the herer to the inrest pointe/ and planten there the sentence of thynges/ so that with sykel helpe it is able to spring. This boke that nothyng hath of the great floode of wyt/ ne of fengsych colours/ is dolueny with rude wordes and boysteous/ and so draw we togyder to maken the catchers thereof ben the more redy to hent sentẽce.

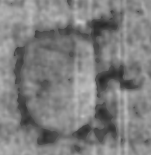
Some men there ben that peynten with colours ryche/ and some with ben/ as with red pnke/ and some with coles and chalke: and yet is there good matere to the leude people of thilke chalky purtreyture/ as hem thynketh for the tyme/ and after warde the syght of the better colours yiuen to hem more hope for the first leudenesse. So sothly this leude clowdy occupation is not to praise/ but by the leude: for comenly leude leudenesse cõmendeth. Se it shal yeue syght that other precious thynges shal be the more in reuerence. In latyn and french hath many souerayne wyttes had gret delyte to endyte/ and haue many ne[illegible]ynges fulfyled/ but certes there ben fa[illegible]pes ben their poesye mater in frenche/ of whiche speche the frenche men haue as good a fantasye as we haue in herying of frenche menne englysshe. And many termes there ben in englysshe/ whiche bewith we englysshmen conuen declare the bno wlegynge: how we shulde than a frenche man borne/ suche termes comme inpere in his mater/ but as they chatereth englysshe. Right so trewly the vnderstandyng of englysshmen wol not stretche to the ynay termes in frenche/ what so euer we boasten of straunge langage. Let than clerkes endyten in latyn/ for they haue the propertie of science and the bnowynge in that facultie: and lette frenchmen in their frenche also endyten their queynt termes/ for it is fyndely to their mouthes/ and let vs shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. And although this boke be lytel thanke worthy for the leudnesse in trauaile/ yet suche wrytynges exciten men to thilke thynges that ben necessarie: for euery man therby may as by a perpetual myrrour sene the vyces or vertues of other/ in whiche thyng lightly may be conceyued to eschewe perylo/ and necessaryes to catche/ after as auentures haue fallen to other people or psons. Certes the souerayngst thing of desyre and moste creature reasonable/ haue or els shulde haue ful appetyte to their perfection: vnreasonable desyres mowen not/ sythe reason hath in hem no werkyng. Than reasonable that wol not/ is comparysoned to vnreasonable/ and made lyke hem. For sothe the most souerayne and fynal perfection of man is in bnowyng of a sothe/ withouten any entent deceyuable/ and in loue of one very god/ that is inchaunge able/ that is to bnowe and loue his creatour. ¶ Nowe principally the meane to bringe in bnowlegyng and louyng his creatour/ is the conſideration of thynges made by the creatour/ wherthrough be thilke thynges that ben made vnderstondyng here to our wyttes/ arne the vnsene pnuytees of god made to vs sightful and bnowyng/ in our cõtemplation & vnderstõdyng. These thynges than forsoth moche bringen vs to ỹ ful bnowlegynge sothe/ and to the parfyte loue of the maker of heuenly thynges. Lo Dauid sayth: thou hast delyted me in makynge/ as who sayth/ to haue delyte in the tune how god hath lent me in conſideration of thy makynge. Wherof Aristotle in the boke de Animalibus/ sayethe to naturel philosophers: It is a great syghyng in loue of bnowynge their creatour: and also in bnowynge of causes in fyndely thyngs cõsydred. For sothe the fowles of fyndely thynges and the shap/ a great fyndely loue me shulde haue to the werkman ỹ hem made. The craft of a werkman is shewed in the werke. Herfore truly the philosophers with a fyndely studye many noble thynges/ sythe

precious and worthy to memory written / & by a great swetande trauayle to be lefte̅ of cau ses the propertyes in natures of thynges. To whiche therfore Phylosophers it was more ioy/more lykynge / more herty lust in bysdely vertues and matters of reason the perfection by busy study to knowe / than to haue had al the treasour/al the richesse/al the bauglory of the passed Emperours / princes / or kynges hadden. Therfore the names of hem in the boke of perpetual memory in vertue and peace ary wryten/and in the contrarye/that is to sayne/ in fyre the foule pytte of helle ary thilke pres sed that furthe goodnesse hated. And bycause this boke shal be of loue / and the pryme caus ses of sterynge in that doynge with passyons and dyseases for wantynge of desyre / I wyl that this boke be cleped the Testament of loue.

But nowe thou reder / who is thylke that wyl not in scorne laughe / to here a dwarfe or cla halse a man/say he wyl rende out the swerde of Hercules handes/and also he shulde set Her cules gades a myle yet further/ and ouer that he had power of strengthe to pul vp the spere/ that Alisander the noble myght neuer wagge.

And that passyng al thynge to ben mayster of Fraunce vp myght/there as the noble gra cyous Edwarde the thyrde for al his great prowesse in victoues ne myght al yet cõquere.

Certes I wote wel/ there shal be made more scorne & rape of me/that I so vnworthely clo thed al togyder in the cloudy cloude of vn connynge wyl putten me in prees to speke of loue/or ela of the causes in that matter/sythen al the gretteste clerkes han had ynough to don/ and as who sayth gathered vp eleme to some hem/and with theyr sharpe sythes of connyng al mowen and made therof great rekes and noble/ful of al plentyes to fede me and many another. Enuye forsothe cõmendeth nought his reason/that he hath in hayn/ be it neuer so trusty. And al thoughe these noble reders/ as good workmen and worthy theyr hyer / han al drawe and bounde vp in the sheues/ & made many shockes / yet haue I ensample to gader the smale crõmes/and fullyn my walet of tho that fallen from the borde amonge the smale houndes / notwithstandynge the transyte of the almesyuer / that holt drawe vp in the cloth al the remyssayles/as trenchours/ and the re lyef to bere to the almesse. Yet also haue I lay ser of the noble husbande Boece/ al thoughe I be a straunger of connynge to come after his doctryne/and these great workmen/ and gleme my handful of the shedynge after theyr hand den/& if me fayle ought of my ful/ to encrease my porcyon with that I shal draw be by pum ckes out of the shocke / a slye seruaunt in his owne helpe is often moche cõmended/ knowe yng of trouth in causes of thynges / was more hardyer in the fust seekers/ and so sayth Ari stotle/ a lyghter in be that han sokowed after. For theyr passyng study han stressched our wyt tes/and our vnderstandynge han eyryed in consideration of trouth by sharpnesse of theyr reasons. Weterly these thynges be no dismes ne tapes/to throwe to hogges / it is lyfelyche meate for chyldren of trouthe/and as they me betiden whan I pilgrymaged out of my kyth in wynter / whan the wether out of mea sure was boyslous/& the wylde wynde Eolus as his kynde asseth with dryenge colder/ maked the wawes of the ocean see so to aryse vnkyndely ouer the cõmune bankes that it was in poynte to spyl al the erthe.



¶ Thus endeth the prologue/ and here after folowyth the fyrst boke of the Testament of Loue.

ALas Fortune alas/ I that ſom
tyme my deſyrous houres was
wont to ſpoy bliſſful ſtoundes/
am nowe dryue by vnhappy he
uynneſſe to bewayle my ſondrye
paſſe in tene. Ertruly I leue/in myn herte is
writte of perdurable letters al the entencyons
of lamentacion that nowe ben purpoſed/for
any maner deface outwarde in ſobbyng ma
ner/ ſhewyth ſorowful prynge from within.
Thus from my comforte I gynne to ſpylle/
frō ſhe that ſhulde me ſolace/ is ferre fro my
preſence. Certes her abſence is to me an hell/
my ſtrenyng bethe thus in wo it wyndeth/ that
endeleſſe care in thought myne herte clenſ
ched/ bliſſe of my lyfe/ that ofte me hurtched
is turned in to galle/ to thynke on thyng that
may not at my wyl in armes me hent. Myth
is chaunged in to tene/ whan ſwynke is there
contynually/ that reſte was wont to ſoiourne
and haue dwellynge place. Thus wyteleſſe
thoughtful/ ſyghtleſſe ſobynge/ I endure my
penaunce in this derke priſone/ captiued fro
frendſhyppe and acquayntaunce/ and forſa
ken of al that any wode dare ſpeke. Strange
hath by waye of intrucyon made his home/
there me ſhulde be/ if reaſon were herde as he
ſhulde. Neuer the later yet hertly lady precious
Margarit/ haue myn de on thy ſeruaunt/ and
thynke on his diſeaſe/ how ſyghtles he ſpueth/
ſithe the beames bitrende in loue of thyn eyen
arn ſo be wet/ that woldes & cloudes atwene
be euery wol not ſuffer my thoughtes of hem
to be enlumyned. Thynke that one vertue of
a Margarite precious is amonges many o
ther the ſorouful to comforte yet wyl of that
me ſorouful to comforte es my luſte to haue
nought ele at this tyme/ bote ne bethe/ ne no
maner treuayle hath no power myne herte ſo
mooke to fade/ as ſhulde to here of a tweyuche
ſyngs in your diſeaſe. Ah/ god forbede that/
but yet latte me bey/ latte me ſtrue without en
any meaſure of penaunce/ rather than myne
hertily thynking comforte in ought were diſ
eaſed. What maye my ſeruyce auayle in ab
ſence of her/ that my ſeruyce ſhulde accepte: in
ſhes nat endeleſſe ſorowe to thynke: Yes/ yes
god wote/ myne hert breaketh nygh a ſonder/
howe ſhulde the grounde without ſyndry nour
riture & nuryng forthe any frutes: howe ſhulde
a ſhippe without en a ſterne in the great ſee be
gouerned: Howe ſhulde I without en my
bliſſe/ my herte/ my deſyre/ my hope/ my good
neſſe/ endure in this contrarious paſſyon/ that
thynke euery hour in the day an hundred wyn
ter: Wel may nowe Eue ſayne to me Adam/
in ſorowe ſalen from welth/ driuen arte thou
out of paradeſe/ with ſweate thy ſuſtenaunce
to be ſwynke. Depe in this pynynge pytte
with wo I ſygge yſtocked/ with chaynes ſyn
ged of care & of tene. It is ſo hye from thens
I ſye and the cōmune erth/ there ne is cable in
no ſande maked/ that myght ſtrethe to me to
draw me vnto bliſſe/ ne ſteyers to ſtep on is
none/ ſo that without recouer endleſſe here to
endure I wotte wel I purueyde. O/ where
arte thou nowe frendſhyppe/ that ſōtyme with
laughande chere/ madeſt bothe face and coun
tenaūce to me wardes: truely nowe arte thou
went out of towne/ but euer me thynketh he
weareth his olde clothes/ & that ꝑ ſoule in the
whiche the lyfe of frendſhyppe was in/ is driu
wen out from his other ſpyrites. Nowe thay
farewel frendſhyp/ and farewel felawes/ me
thynketh ye al han taken your leaue: no force
of you al at ones. But lady of loue ye wote
what I mene/ yet thinke on thy ſeruaunt/ that
for thy ſore ſpilleth/ al thynges haue I for
ſake to folowen thyn heſtes: reuarde me with
a thought/ though ye do naught ele. Remem
braunce of loue ſythe ſo ſore vnder my breſt/
that other thought cometh not in my mynde/
but gladneſſe to thynke on your goodneſſe
and your mery chere/ frendes and ſorowe to
thynke on your wreche and your daunger/
from whiche Chriſte me ſaue. Thy great ioye
it is to haue in meditation the bountees/ the
vertues/ the noblay in you pynted: ſorowe
and hel comen at ones/ to ſuppoſe that I be
beyned. Thus with care/ ſorowe/ and tene my
I ſhape myn ende with bethe to make. Nowe
good goodly thynke on this. O wretched
foole that I am ſallen in to ſo lowe/ the ſcate
of my birnyng tene hath me al deſaſed: ho in
ſhulde ye lady ſette puſe on ſo ſoule ſyghte
thy crouynge is thynne/ my wytte is ꝛeueled/

lyke to a foole naturel an I compary ſonerd.
Treuly lady but your mercy the more were/
I wote wel al my labour were in yde: your
mercy than passeth right. God graunt that
propoſycion to be verifyed in me/ ſo that by
truſte of good hope/ I mowe come to the ha-
uen of eaſe/ and ſythe it is impoſſyble/ the co-
lours of your qualyties to chaunge: and for-
ſothe I wote wel wemmeles ſpotte maye not
abyde/ there ſo noble vertue habounded/ ſo
that the deſayng to you is verily pwagyna-
ble/ as countrnaunce of goodneſſe with encre-
ſynge vertue/ is ſo ny you knytte to abyde by
neceſſary maner/ yet if the reuers myght fal/
whiche is afenſt kynde/ I wol wel myn herte
ne ſhulde therfore naught ſlytte by the leſte
poynt of gemetrye/ ſo ſadly is it ſonded/ that
away from your ſeruyce my loue maye he not
departe. O loue/ whan ſhal I ben pleaſed?
O charyte/ whan ſhal I ben eaſed? O good
goodly/ whan ſhal the dyce turne? O ful of
vertue do the chaunce of comforte vpwarde
to fal. O loue/ whan wolt thou thynke on thy
ſeruaunt? I can no more but here out caſte of
al welfare/ abyde the daye of my dethe/ or elſe
to ſe the ſyght that myght al my wellynge ſo-
rowes voyde/ and of the flodde make an ebbe.
Theſe diſeaſes mowen wel by dureſſe of ſo-
rowe/ make my lyfe to vnbodye/ and ſo for to
dye: but certes ye lady my a ful perfection of
loue ben ſo knytte with my ſoule/ that dethe
may not thilke knotte vnbynde ne departe/ ſo
that ye and my ſoule togyther is endeleſſe/ my
blyſſe ſhulde dwel/ and there ſhal my ſoule at
the ful ben eaſed/ that he may haue your pre-
ſence to ſhewe the entent of his deſyres: Ah dere
god/ that ſhal be a great ioye. Nowe certeſly
goddeſſe take regarde of thy ſeruant/ though
I be feble/ for thou arte wonte to prayſe thyn
better/ that wolde conne ſerue my loue/ al be he
ful meuer than kynges or princes/ that wol
not haue that vertue in mynde. Nowe pre-
cious Margaryte/ that with thy noble vertue
haſte drawen me to loue ſtedfaſt/ me wenynge
therof to haue blyſſe/ as galle and aloes are ſo
moche ſpronge/ that ſauour of ſwetneſſe may
I not taſte. Alas that your benigne eyen/ in
whiche that mercy ſemeth to haue al his reſyd-
ence/ nyl by no wyſe tourne the eſtreſſe of
mercy to me wardes. Alas that your vma-
made vertues/ ſhynyng amonges al folke/
and enlumynynge al other people by habun-
daunce of encreaſing/ ſhewith to me but ſmoke
and no light. Theſe thynges to thinke in myn
herte maketh euery day wepyng in myn eyen
to renne. Theſe lyggen on my backe ſo ſore/
that importable burthen me ſemeth on my
backe to be charged/ it maketh me backwarde
to meue/ whan my ſtreppes by comune courſe
euen forthe pretende: Theſe thynges alſo on
right ſore and lyft/ haue me ſo enuolued with
care/ that wanhope of helpe is throughout me
ronne/ treuly and leue that gracieſſe is my
fortune/ whiche that euer ſheweth it me ward-
des by a cloudy diſeaſe/ al redy to make ſtor-
mes of teres/ and the bliſful ſpede halte ſtyl a-
waywarde/ and wol it not ſuffre to me wardes
to turne: no force/ yet wol I not ben conquered.

O/ alas that your nobley ſo moche among
al other creatures commended by ſolowyng
ſtreme by al maner vertues/ but ther ben wō-
derful/ I not whiche that let the flode to come
in to my ſoule/ wherfore purely mated with
ſorowe thorough ſought/ my ſelfe I crye on
your goodneſſe to haue pyte on this captife/
that in the intreſt degre of ſorowe and diſeaſe
is lefte/ & without your goodly wyl from any
helpe and recouery. Theſe ſorowes maye I
not ſuſtene/ but if my ſorowe ſhulde be tolde
and to you wardes ſhewed/ although moche
ſpare is betwene bo twayne/ yet me thynketh
that by ſuche wofeynynge wordes/ my diſeaſe
ynneth ebbe. Treuly me thynketh that the
ſowne of my lamentacions wepyng/ is right
nowe flowe in to your preſence/ & there crieth
after mercy & grace/ to which thing me ſemeth
the lyft none anſwere to yeue/ but with a deyn-
nous chere ye cōmaunden it to auoyde/ but god
forbyd that any woorde ſhuld of you ſpronge to
haue ſo lyteel routh. Parde pyte & mercy in cu-
ry Margarite is cloſed by kynde and gan ma-
ny other vertues/ by qualites of comforte/ but
comfort in to me right naught wantſe/ with-
outen mercy and pyte of you alone/ whiche
thynges haſtely god me graunt for his mercy.

Chaucer.

Beforsynge theſe thynges and many other/ without tyme or moment of reſt me ſemed for anguyſſhe of diſeaſe/ that al togyder I was raueyſſhed/ I can not tel how me/ but holy al my paſſyons and felynges weren loſte/ as it ſemed for the tyme/ and ſodainly a maner of drede fyght in me al at onces/ nought ſuche feare as foule haue of an enemy that were myghty/ and wolde hem greue or done hem diſeaſe: For I troe we thou is wel knowe to many perſones/ that otherwhyle if a man be in his ſouereignes preſence/ a maner of ferdenneſſe crepeth in his herte/ not for harme/ but of goodly ſubiection: namely as men tellen that aungels ben afrede of our ſauyour in heuen. And parde there ne is/ ne maye no paſſyon of diſeaſe be/ but it is to meane that angels ben adradde/ not by frendes of drede/ ſythen they ben perfytely bleſſed/ as affection of wonderfulneſſe & by ſcrupee of obedyence/ ſuche ferde alſo han theſe louers in preſence of their loues/ and ſubiectes afore their ſouereynes: Right ſo with ferdenneſſe myn herte was caught. And I ſodainly aſtonyed/ there entred in to the place there I was lodged a lady/ the ſemelyeſt and moſte goodly to my ſyght/ that ever to fore apered to any creature/ and trewly in the bluſtrynge of her looke/ ſhe gaue gladneſſe and comforte ſodainly to al my wyttes/ and ryght ſo ſhe dothe to every wyght that cometh in her preſence. And for ſhe was ſo goodly (as me thought) myne herte beganne ſomdele to be aſſured/ and wexe a lytel hardy to ſpeke/ but yet with a quakynge voyce/ as I durſte/ I ſaluted her/ and enquired what ſhe was/ and why ſhe ſo worthy to ſyght/ dayned to entre in to ſo foule a dongeon/ and namely a priſone/ without ſcaue of my keperes. For certes al thoughe the vertue of dedes of mercy ſtretcheth hyr to viſyten the poore priſoners/ and hem eſpecyal that faculties ben had to comforte/ me ſemed that I was ſo ferre fallen in to myſerye and wretched hyd caytifneſſe/ that me ſhulde no perſone ſhynge neyghen and alſo that for my ſore we every wyght ſhulde hem hraup/ and wyſſhe my recouery. But whan this lady had ſomdele apperceyued/ as wel by my wordes as by my chere/ what thought beſyed me within/ with a good womanly countenaunce ſhe ſayde theſe wordes.

O my nory/ wenyſt thou that my maner be/ to forget my frendes or my ſeruauntes? naye (quod ſhe) it is my ful entente to viſyte and comforte al my frendſhippes and alyes/ as wel in tyme of perturbation/ as of moſt proſperyte of bliſſe/ in me ſhal vnkyndneſſe neuer be founden. And alſo ſithen I haue ſo fewe eſpecial trewe now in theſe dayes/ wherfore I maye wel at more leyſar come to hem that me deſerueth/ and if my cōmynge maye in any thynge auayle/ wete wel I wol come often.

Now good lady (quod I) that art ſo fayre on to loke/ reuynge honny by thy wordes/ bliſſe of paradiſe arn thy ſokynges/ ioye and comforte are thy mouynges. What is thy name? how is it that in you is ſo moſel wer thynge vertues enpight/ as me ſemeth/ and in none other creature þ euer ſawe I with myne eyen? Why diſcryue (quod ſhe) me wondreth of thy wordes and on the/ þ for a lytal diſeaſe haſte forgeten my name: Woſte thou not wel that I am Loue/ that firſt the brought to thy ſcrupee? O good lady (qd I) is this wor ſhyppe to the or to thyne excellence for to come in to ſo foule a place? Parde ſomtyme tho I was in proſperyte/ and with forayne goodes enuolued/ I had moſyl to done to draw the to myn hoſtel/ and yet many werynges thou madeſt er thou cyſte fully to graunt/ thyne home to make at my dwellyng place: & now thou comeſt goodly by thyne owne vyſe/ to comforte me with wordes/ and ſo there thoughe I gynne remembre on paſſed gladneſſe. Trewly lady I ne wotte whether I ſhal ſay welcome or none/ ſythen thy comyng wol as moche do me trne and ſorowe/ as gladneſſe and myrthe: ſe why. For that me comforteth to thynke on paſſed gladneſſe/ that me anoyeth eſte to be in dopnge. Thus thy comynge bothe gladdeth and tenth/ and that is cauſe of moche ſorowe: Lo lady I haue

thy

than I am comforted by your cõmynge/ and with that I gan in teeres to distylle/ and tenderly wepe. Now we certes (quod some) I se wel (and that me ouerthynketh) that wytte in the fayleth/ and arte in poynte to dote.

Trewly (quod I) that haue ye mased/ and that euer wol I rue. Wottest thou not wel (quod she) that euery shepeherde ought by reson to sene his sperselande shepe that arne ronne in to wyldernesse/amonge bussches and perylo/and hem to their pasture ayen bringe/ and take on hem pitty very cure of kepyng: and tho the vncommynge shepe scattred wolde ben loste/rennyng to wyldernesse/ and to desertes drawe/ or els wolden put hem selfe to the swalowyng wolfe/ yet shal the shepeherde by busynesse and trauayle so put hym forthe/ that he shal not set hem be loste by no waye. A good shepeherde putteth rather his lyfe to ben loste for his shepe. But for thou shalte not wene me beyng of werse condycion/trewly for euerych of my folke/ and for al tho that to me warde be knyt in any condycion/ I wol rather dye than suffre hem throughe errour to ben spylte. For me lyste/ and it me lyketh/ of al myne a shepherdesse to be cleped. Wost thou not wel I sayled neuer wight / but he me refused/ and wolde neglygently go with vnkyndenesse: and yet parde haue I many such holpe and releued/ and they haue ofte me begyled/ but euer at the ende it discendeth in their owne neckes. Hastc thou not radde how vnkynde I was to Paris/Priamus sõne of Troy: How Jason me falsed for al his false beheste: how Eneas sonke/ I leste it forno tene tyl he was croned in my blysse for his seruyce. What (qd she) most of al / maked I not a louedaye bytwene god and mankynde/and chese a mayde to be nompere/to put the quarel at ende: Lo/ how we I haue trauayled to haue thanke on al sydes/ and yet lyst me not to rest/ and I myst fynde on home I shulde werche. But trewly myn owne disciple/ bycause I haue the founde at al assayes in thy wyl to be redy myn hestes to haue folowed/ and hastc ben trewe to that Margaryte perle/ that ones I the shewed/ and she alwaye ayenwarde hath made but daungerous chere/ I am come in propre person to put the out of errours/ and make the glodde by wayes of reason/so that sorowe ne disease shal no more herrafter the anoyfery. Wherthrough I hope thou shalte lyghtly come to the grace/ that thou longe haste desyred/of thylke trewe. Haste thou not herde many ensamples/ howe I haue comforted and releued the scholers of my lore: Who hath worthyed kynges in the felde: Who hath honoured ladyes in bowre by a perpetuel myrrour of their truthe in my seruyce: Who hath caused worthy folke to voyde vyce and shame: Who hath holde cytes and realmes in prosperyte: if the lyste cleape ayen thyn olde remembraunce/ thou rendest euery poynte of this declarc in especial/ and say that I thy maystresse haue be cause/causyng these thynges and many mo other. Nowe trwys madame (quod I) al these thynges I knowe wel my selfe/ and that thyn excellence passeth the vnderstandyng of vs berthes/ and that no mannes wytte erthely may comprehende thy vertues. Wel than (quod she) for I se the in disease and sorowe/ I wote wel thou arte one of myn nones/ I maye not suffre the so to make sorowe/thyn owne selfe to shende:but I my selfe come to be thy leche/thyne heuy charge to make to lesse me lesse / for wo is him that is a lone: And to the sorye to ben moned by a sorouful wight it is great gladnesse. Right so with my speke frendes I am sicke/ and with sorie I can not els but sorowe make/tyl whan I haue hem releued/ in suche wyse that gladnesse in a maner of counterpayfyng shal restore as mokyl in ioye as the passed heuynesse byforne dyd in tene. And also (qd she) whan any of my seruauntes ben a lone in solytary place/ I haue yet euer besyed me to be with hem/ in comforte of their hertes/ and taught hem to make songes of playnte and of blysse/ and to endyten letters of rethoryke in quayntc vnderstondynges/ and to bethynke hem in what wyse they might best their ladyes in good seruyce please/and also to lerne maner in countenaũce/in wordes/ and in bearyng/ and to ben mery and solowly to euery wight/for name and fame to encrease/and to yeue gret yeftes and large/ that

ranone maye springen/ but the therof haue
I excused for thy losse and thy great costages/ wherthroughe thou arte nedy/ bene nos
thynge to me vnknowen/ but I hope to god
sonthynne it shal ben amended/ as thus as I
sayd. In nouture haue I taught al myne/ and
in entreprise made hem expert therr ladyes hertes to wynne/ and if any wolde endeymous as
possible as he couthe/ or of wittes arqueyn
taunce/ hastelyche haue I sarche voyded out of
my schole: for al vyces trewly I hate: vertues and worthynesse in al my power I as
maunce. Ah worthy creature (quod I) and
by iuste cause the name of goddesse dignely ye
nowe beare: In the sythe the grace thorough
whiche any creature in this worlde hath any
goodnesse/ trewly al maner of vyllyse and pre
nouysnesse in vertue out of the springen/ and
welleth/ as bookes and ryuers proceden from
therr springes/ and lyke as al waters by kynde
drawen to the see/ so al kyndely thynges thre
sten by ful appetyte of desyre to drawe after
thy steppes/ and to thy presence aproche/ as to
therr kyndely perfection: Nowe dare than bee
sieve in this worlde aught forfete ayenst thy
deyne paruerpaunce: Also lady ye knowen
al the puny thoughtes/ in hertes no counsayle
maye ben hydde from your knowyng. Wher
fore I wote wel lady that ye knowe your selfe
that I in my conscience any and haue ben wyl
lynge to your seruyce/ al coude I neuer do as
I shulde/ yet forsothe sayned I neuer to loue
otherwyse than was in myn herte: and if I
coude haue made chere to one/ and ythought
another/ as many other doone aldaye afore
myn eyen/ I trowe it wolde not me haue bay
sed. Certes (quod she) haddest thou so done/
I wolde not nowe haue the here bysited. Ye
wete wel lady elle (quod I) that I haue not
playde rabet/ nettyl in/ horse out/ and with the
wetherrocke waued/ and trewly there ye me
sette/ by acorde of my conscience/ I wolde not
stye/ tyl ye and reason by aperte strength ma
den/ myn herte to tourne. In good sayth
(quod she) I haue knowe the cure of tho con
ysaunce/ and sythen thou woldest (in as moch
as in the was) a made me puny of thy counsayle/ and inge of thy conscience/ though I for
sothe it in tho dayes/ tyl I saw better my tyme/
wolde neuer god that I shuld nowe sayse/ but
cure I wol be redy wytnessyng thy sothe/ in
what place that euer I shal/ ayenst al tho that
wol the contrary susteyne: And for as moche
as to me is naught knowen nowe hyd of thy
puny hert/ but al hast thou tho thynges made
to me open at the ful/ that hath caused my co
mynge in to this prison to voyde the webbes
of thyne eyen/ to make the clerely to se the ex
roure thou hast ben in/ and bycause that men
ben of dyuers condycions/ some a dradde to
saye a sothe/ and some for a sothe anone redy
to fyght/ and also that I maye not my selfe
ben in place to withsay thilke men that of the
spoken/ other wyse than the sothe/ I wol and
I charge the in vertue of obedyence/ that thou
to me owest/ to write my wordes/ and sette
hem in writyngre that they nowe as my wit
nessyng ben noted amonge the people. For
bookes written neyther dreden ne shamen/ ne
fryne conne/ but onely shewen the entente of
the writer/ and yeue remembraunce to the hea
rer: and if any wol in thy presence saye any
thynge to tho writers/ loke boldely/ truste on
Mars to answere at the ful. For certes I shal
hym ensourme of al the trouthe in thy sonet
with thy conscience/ so that of his helpe thou
shalte not farye at thy nede. I trowe the
strongest and the beste that maye be founde
wol not transuers thy wordes/ wherof than
woldest thou drede.

Gretly was I tho gladed of these wordes/
and as who sayth weyen sondele sighte
in herte/ both for the auctorite of witnesse/ and
also for sykernesse of helpe of the forsayd be
heste/ and sayd. Trewly lady nowe am I wel
gladded thorough comforte of your wordes: be
it nowe spynge vnto your nobley to shewe
whiche sothe dissame your seruauntes/ sythe
your scrupe ought avoune al other thynges to
ben comended. Yet (quod she) I se wel thy
soule is not al out of the amased doude: the
were better to here thyng that the myght sighte
out of thyn heuy charge/ and after knowyng
of thyn owne helpe/ than to sykyr/ I wote wor
des and

bes/and ſuch reſons to here: for in a thoughtful ſoule(and namely ſuche one as thou arte) wol not yet ſuche thynges ſynken. Come of therfore and let me fene thy heuy charge/ that I may the lyghtlyer for thy comforte purueye.

Nowe certes lady (quod I) the moſte comforte I myght haue/ were verely to wete me be ſure in herte of that Margaryte I ſerue/ and ſo I thinke to don with al myghtes whyle my lyfe dureth. Than (qd ſhe) mayſte thou therafter/ in ſuche wyſe that myſpleſaunce ne entre? In good fayth (quod I) there ſhal no miſpleſaunce be cauſed through treſpace on my ſyde. And I do the to weten (quod ſhe) I ſet neuer yet perſon to ſerue in no place (but if he cauſed the cõtrary in defautes and treſpaces) that he ne ſpedde of his ſeruyce. Why o wine erthly lady (quod I tho) and yet remembre to your worthyneſſe howe long ſythen by many reuolupng of yeres/ in tyme whan Octobre his leaue gynneth take/ & Nouembre ſhe weth hym to fyght/ whan bernes ben ful of goodes as is the nutte on euery halke/ and than good londe tyllers gynne shape for the erthe/ with great trauayle to brynge forthe more corne to mannes ſuſtenaunce/ ayenſt the neyte yeres folowyng. In ſuche tyme of plentie/ he that hath ay home/ and is wyſe/ lyſte not to wander meruayles to ſethe/ but he be conſtrayned or excited: oft the lothe thyng is doone by expectacion of other mannes opynyon/ whiche wolden ſayne haue myn abſence/ take in herte of luſte to trauayle and ſe the wyndyng of the erthe in that tyme of wynter/ by wodes that large ſtretes werne in/ by ſmale pathes that ſwyne and hogges haddeth made/ as laues with ladels their maſte to ſethe/ I walked thynſynge alone a wonder great whyle/ and the great beeſtes that the woode haunten and abouneth al maner foreſtes/ and herden gone to wylde: than er I was ware I neyghed to a fer banke/ and for ferde of the beeſtes ſhyuerafte I cryde: For lady I trowe ye wete wel your ſelfe nothyng is werſe than the beeſtes that ſhulden ben tame/ if they catche her wyldemeſſe/ and gynne apen wape ramage: thus forſothe was I a ferde/ and to ſhyppe me hyed. Than were there ynowe to lache myn handes and drawe me to ſhyppe/ of whiche many I ſuche wel the names. Dyght was the firſt/ luſt was a nother/ thought was the thirde/ and wyl elle was there a mayſter: theſe broughten me within borde of this ſhyppe al trauayle. So whan the ſayle was ſpred and this ſhyppe gan to moue/ the wynde and water gan for to ryſe/ and ouerwhartly to turne the welken/ the wawes femeden as they ryſſe togyder/ but often vnder colour of ayſynge to moſel olde hate prively cloſed and wryen. The ſtorme ſo ſtraungely and in a deuerſyng manet gan ſo faſte vs aſſayle/ that I ſuppoſed the date of my deth ſhulde haue made there his gynnyng/ nowe vp nowe downe/ nowe vnder the wawe and nowe aboven was my ſhyppe a great whyle. And ſo by moſel buſteſſe of wethers & of ſtormes/ and with great anoyng pylgrimages I was driuen to an yle/ where verely I wende ſuſt to haue be reſcowed/ but trewly as the firſt gynnyng it ſemed me ſo perylous the hauen to cathe/ that but thorowe grace I had ben comforted/ of lyfe I was ful deſpayred. Ette why lady if ye remembre a right of al maner thynges/ your ſelfe came haſtely to ſene vs ſee driuen/ and to weten what we weren: but firſt ye were deynous of chere/ after whiche ye gonne better alyght/ & euer as me thought ye ſyued in great drede of diſeaſe/ it ſemed ſo vp your chere. And whan I was certified of your name/ the lenger I loked in you/ the more I you goodly dradde/ and euer myn herte on you opened the more/ and ſo in a ſyker tyme my ſhyppe was out of myndе. But lady as ye me lad I was ware bothe of beeſtes and of fyſſhes a great nombre throngyng togyder: amonge whiche a muſſel in a vie we ſhel had cnoloſed a Margarpte perle/ the moſte precious and beſt that euer to ſonne came in my ſyght/ and ye tolden your ſelfe that ylke iewel in his kynde was ſo good and ſo vertuous/ that her better ſhulde I neuer fynde/ al ſought I therafter in the worldes ende/ and with that I beſoke my peace a great whyle: and euer ſythen I haue me beſthought on the man that ſought the precious Margaryteys/ and whan he had founden one to his lykyng/ he ſolde al his good to bye that

iewel.

ierwel: I was thought I and yet so I thynke/ now haue I founden the iewel/ that myne herte desyreth/ wherto shulde I seche further/ certes now we wot I shyne/ and on this Margarite I sette me for euer. Now we than also sythen I wyste wel it was your wyl that I shulde so suche a seruyce me take/ and so to dese yse that thyng/ of whiche I neuer haue blisse/ there fyrste name/ but he hath desyre: your might than that brought me to suche seruyce/ that to me is cause of sorowe and of sore/ I wonder of your wonde that ye sayne/ to hungery my to sore/ and parde ye wote wel that desyre me trespace may not reasonably ben put to me warden/ as ferre as my conscience knoweth: But of my disease me lyst now a whyle to spekę/ & to enforme you in what maner of blysse ye haue me thronge. For truly I wene that al gladnesse/ al sore/ and al myrthe is beset vnder locke/ and the keye thrawe in suche place that it may not be founde: my desyre wo hath altred al my hewe. Whan I shulde slepe/ I wake we & I thynke/ and me disporte. Thus combred/ I sone that al folke had me mased. Also lady myne/ desyre hath longe dured/ some spekyng to haue/ or els at ꝑ left haue ben enuoyced with syght: and for wantynge of these thinges/ my mouthe wolde & he durst/ pleyne right sore/ sythen purse for my goodnesse arne manyfolde to me polden. I wonder lady certes/ saue euermore your reuerence/ how we ye me we for shame suche thynges suffre on your seruaunt to be so multyplyed: Wherfore knelyng with a lowe herte I pray you to rue on this captife/ that of nothyng now may serue. Good lady if ye lyst me we your helpe to me shewe/ that ony of your puyssest seruauntes at al assayes in this tyme/ and vnder your wynges of protection. Yo helpe to me warden is shapen/ how we shal than straungers in anywyse after socoure take/ whan I that ony so puny/ yet of helpe I do fayle? Further maye I not/ but thus in this prison abyde: what bondes and chaynes me holden/ lady ye se wel your selfe: A trepent forynged hath not halfe the cure. But thus syghyng and sobbyng I wayle here alone/ and nere it for comforte of your pursuer/ right here wolde I sterue. And yet a lyttel ony I gladed/ that so goodly suche grace and none hap haue I hente/ graciously to fynde the precious Margarite/ that al other lefte men shulde dye/ if they shulde therfore set al her substaunce. Wo is me that so many set games and purpose diuers ben maked wayteres/ suche pusoners as I am enemye to destroye and to hynder/ and for suche lettoure it is harde any suche iewel to wynne. Ye thin lady ay honour to thy deyte: me thynketh by right/ suche people shulde haue no maistrye me ben ouerlokers ouer none of thy seruauntes. Trewly were it lefful vnto you/ to al the goddes wolde I playne/ that ye rule your desyre puruyaunce amonges your seruantes nothyng as ye shulde. Also lady my mocke is insufficyaunt to counteruayle the price of this iewel/ or els to make the change: the no wight is worthy suche perles to weare/ but ryngen or prices/ or els their peres: this iewel for Vertue wold adorne & make fayre al a realme/ the nobley of Vertue is so moche ꝑ her goodnesse oueral is comended. Who is it that wolde not wayle but he might suche rychesse haue at his wyl/ the Vertue therof out of this prison may me delyuer/ & naught els. And if I be not ther thoro we holpen/ I se my selfe withouten recouery: Although I might here boyde/ yet wolde I not/ I wolde abyde the daye that destenye hath me ordeyned/ whiche I suppose is without amendement/ so fore is myn herte bounden/ that I maye thynken none other. Thus strayte (lady) hath sir Daunger laced me my stroches/ I leue it be not your wyl: and for I se you taken so lytel hede/ as me thynketh/ and wol not maken by your might the Vertue in mercy of ꝑ Margarite on me for to stretche/ so as ye me we wel/ in case that you lyste: my blysse and my mirthe arne sold/ sickenesse and sorowe ben alwaye redy/ the cope of tene is wounde about al my body/ that standyng in me dest/ Vaneth maye I syngge for pure mysease sorowe/ and yet al this is lytel enoughe to be the ernest sylver/ in forwarde of this bargayne/ for trebble solde/ so moche must I lose/ er tyme come of myn ease. For se is worthy no welthe/ that maye no wo susser. And certes I am sory to thynke on these thynges/

But

But who ſhal yeue me water ynough to deliſ
feſt myn eyen day and nyght for rennyng ſtremes of teã
res? Who ſhal wayſen with me myne owne
happy heuyneſſe: who ſhal counſaile me now
in my ſykyng tene/ and in my goodly harme?
I not. For euer the more I brenne/ the more I
coueyte: the more that I ſorow/ the more thurſt
I in gladneſſe. Who ſhal than yeue me a con
trarious drinke/ to ſtanche the thurſte of my
blyſſful bytterneſſe? Lo thus I brenne and I
drenche/ I ſhyuer and I ſweate/ to this reuer
ſed fuel was neuer yet ordeyned ſalue/ for foth
al ſyches ben vnconnyng/ ſaue the Wargas
ryte alone/ any ſuche remedye to purueye.

And with theſe wordes I braſt out to wepe/
that euery teere of myne eyen for greatneſſe
ſemed they borey out the bal of my ſyght/ and
that al the water had ben out ronne. Than
thought me/ that loue gan a ſytel to heauy for
miſcomfort of my chere/ and gan ſoberly and
in eaſy maner ſpeke/ wel auyſinge what ſhe
ſayd. Comenly the wyſe ſpeken eaſyly and
ſofte for many ſkyles: One is/ their wordes
are the better byleued/ and alſo in eaſy ſpea
kynge/ auyſement men may catche/ what to
put forthe/ and what to holden in. And alſo
the auctorite of eaſy wordes is the more/ and
eke they peuen the more vnderſtandynge to
other intencion of the mater. Right ſo this la
dye eaſely and in a ſofte maner gan ſay theſe
wordes. ¶ Weruayle (quod ſhe) great it is/
that by no maner of ſemblaunt/ as ferre as
I can eſpye/ thou lyſt not to haue any recour/
but euer thou playneſt and forweſt/ & wayes
of remedye for ſolyſſhe wylfulneſſe the lyſte
not to ſeche: but enquire of thy next frendes/
that is thyne in wytte/ and me that haue ben
thy mayſtreſſe and the recour and fyne of thy
diſeaſe/ or of diſeaſe is gladneſſe and ioy/ with
a ful neſſel ſo holden/ that it quencheth the fe
lynge of the firſte tenes. But thou that were
wonte not onely theſe thynges remembre in
thyne herte/ but alſo fooles therof to enfour
mery/ in adnullynge of their errours/ and diſ
troyeng of their derke opynions/ and in com
forte of their feare thoughtes: now canſt thou
not ben comforte of thyn owne ſoule/ in thyn
kyng of theſe thynges. O where haſte thou
be ſo longe cõmenſal/ that haſt ſo myſſed eetyn
of the potages of forgetfulneſſe/ and dronken
ſo of ignorance/ that the olde ſouking whiche
thou haddeſt of me/ arne a mayſtreſſ and ſoug
ſto al maner of knowyng? O thus is a wor
thy perſon to helpe other/ that can not coun
ſayle him ſelfe. And with theſe wordes ſo
pure and ſtronge ſhame I wope al red.
And ſhe than ſeyng me ſo aſtonyed by dyuers
ſtoundes/ ſodainly (whiche thynge ſynde ha
teth) gan delicouſly me comforte with fugred
wordes/ puttyng me in ful hope that I ſhulde
the Wargarite getten/ if I folowed her leſſon/
and gan with a ſayre clothe to wypen the tea
res that hyngen on my cheken: and than ſayd
I in this wyſe. Now wel of wyſedom and
of al welthe/ withouten the may nothyng ben
lerned/ thou beareſt the keyes of al puny thin
ges. In vayne trauayle men to catche any
fredſhyp/ but if ye lady firſt the locke vnſhet/
ye lady lerne vs the wayes and the by pathes
to heuen: ye lady maken al the heuenly godes
goodly and benygnely to done her courſe/ that
gouernen vs beſtes here on erthe. ye armen
your ſeruauntes ayenſt al debates/ with im
pernable harneys/ ye ſetten in her hertes inſu
perable blode of hardyneſſe/ ye leaden hem to
the parfyte good. Yet al thynge deſyreth/ ye
wern no man of helpe ꝑ wele done your lore/
graunt me now a ſytel of your grace/ al my
ſoowes to ceaſe. ¶ Myne owne ſeruaunt (qõ
ſhe) treuly thou ſyteſt nye myne herte/ & thy
badde chere gan ſoully me grieue: but amonge
thy playnyng wordes me thought thou alle
geſt thynges to be lettyng of thyne helpynge/
and thy grace to hynder/ wherthrought me
thynketh that wãhopeys crope thorough thy
hert: God forbyd that vyſe vnthryſty thought
ſhulde come in thy mynde thy wyttes to trou
ble/ ſythen euery thyng in comyng is contyn
gent/ wherfore make no more thy propoſycion
by an impoſſyble. But now I praye the re
herſe me ayen the thynges/ that thy miſtruſt
cauſen/ and thyſe thynges I thynke by rea
ſon to diſtroyen/ & put ful hope in thyn herte.
What vnderſtanderſt thou there (quod ſhe) by
that thou ſaydeſt/ many ſelte games are thyn

eares

wurtheres. And also by that thy mouthe is vnsufficyant I not what thou therof meanest.

Truly (qõ I) by the first I say that tongers euermore arne spekynge rather of yuel than of good/for euery age of man rather enclyneth to wickednesse/than any goodnesse to auaunce. Also false wordes springen so wyde/ by the steerynge of false spekynge tonges/ that fame also swiftely flyeth to her eares/ & sayth many wicked tales/ and as soone shal falsenesse ben leued as truthe/ for al his grete sothnesse. Now by that other (qõ I) me thynketh thilke iewel so precious/that to no suche wretche as I am/ wolde vertue therof extende/ & also I am to feble in worldly ioyes/any suche iewel to countremayle. For suche people that worldly ioyes han at her wyl/ ben sette at the highest degree/ and most in reuerence ben accepted/ for false weuyng maketh selyate therin to be supposed: but suche captiues as I am euermore ben hyndred. Certes (qõ she) take good hede & I shal by reason to the shewen/ þ al these thynges mowe nat set thy purpose/by the leest poynt that any wight coude pucke.

REmembrest nat (qõ she) ensample is one of the strongest maner/ as for to pieue a mánes purpose. Than if I nowe by ensample enduce the to any propositon/ is it nat proued by strength? Yes forsothe (qõ I) Wel (qõ she) raddest thou neuer howe Paris of Troye and Helayne loued togyder/and yet had they not entrecommuned of speche? Also Acrisius shette Dane his doughter in a toure/ for suerte that no wight shulde of her haue no maistry in my seruyce/ and yet Iupiter by signes without any speche had al his purpose eyenst her fathers wyl. And many suche mo haue ben knytte in trouthe and yet spake they neuer togyder/for that is a thyng enclosed vnder secretnesse of pryuete/why they yfounde entremellin hertes after a sight. The power in knowyng of such thynges so priuey/shal nat al litterly be yeuen to you breetes/ for many thynges in suche precious moters/ben truced to inguement of deuyne purueyance/for amõg lyuyng people/ by mánes cõsideration mouthe they nat be determyned. Wherfore I sayd at the entry/ al the iangelynge/ that welny people vpon my seruantes mayen este/ is rather cause of esployte/ than of any hyndringe. Why than (qõ I) suffre ye such wrong/ and mony whan ye lyst/ taghtly al such pueple abate/ me semeth to you it is a great vnworshyp. O (qõ she) holde nowe thy peace/I haue founden to many that han ben to me vnkynde/that trewly I wol suffre euery wight in that wyse to haue desease/ & who that contynueth to the ende wel and trewly/ hem wol I helpen / & as for one of myne in to blysse to wende/as martial doyng in Grece. Who was preuued/by god nat the strogest/ but he that ratheste come and lengest abode & contynued in the iourney/and spared nat to trauayle as long as þ day lest. But thilke person þ profred him nowe to my seruyce therin is a while/ & anon voydeth and redy to another/ & so nowe one he thynketh & nowe another/ and in to water entreth and anon respireth/ such one lyst me nat in to pryse blysse of my seruyce binge. A tree ofte set in dyuers places wol nat by kynde enduce to brige fouth frutes. Lose nowe I pray the/ howe myne olde seruauntes of tyme passed contynued in her seruyce/ & folowe thou after their steppes/ and than myght thou not fayle/ in case thou worche in this wyse. Certes (qõ I) it is nothyng lych/this worlde to tyme passed/ ebe this countre hath one maner/and another countre hath another. And so may nat a man alwaye put to his eye the salue that he healed with his hele. For this is sothe/ betwixe two thynges lyche/ ofte diuersite is required. Nowe (qõ she) that is sothe/ diuersite of nation/diuersite of lawe/ as was maked by many reasone/ for that diuersyte cometh in by þ contrarious makyer of wicked people/ þ han enuyous hertes ayẽst other. But trewly my lawe to my seruauntes euer hath ben vigenerall/ whiche may nat fayle/ for right as mannes lawes/that is ordayned by many determinatiõe/may nat be knowe for good or badde/ tyl assay of the people han pued it/ & to what ende it drawyth/ & than it sheweth the necessite therof/ or ellis the impossibilyte. Right so the lawe of my seruauntes so wel hath ben pued in generall/ that hytherto hath it not fayled

Wyſte thou not wel that al the lawe of Fyn
de is my lawe/and by god ordayned & ſtabliſ-
ſhed to dure by Fynde reaſonn / wherfore al
lawe by mannes wytte purueyde/ought to be
Inderputte to lawe of Fynde/ whiche yet hath
be cõmune to euery Fyndely creature/that my
ſtatutes and my lawe that ben Fyndely/ arne
general to al peoples. Olde doynges/and by
many turnynges of peres vſed/ and with the
peoples maner proued/ mowen nat ſo lightly
ben defaſed/ but newe doynges contrariaun-
tes ſuche olde/ often cauſen diſeaſes and bien-
ben many purpoſes. Yet ſaye I nat therfore/
that ayen newe miſchefe / men ſhulde nat or-
dayned a newe remedye/ but alwaye looke it
contrary not the olde/no ferther than the ma-
ſtre ſtretcheth. Than folowethe it the olde do-
ynges in loue han ben vnpuerſal/as for moſt
cyployte forthe vſed: wherfore I wol not
yet that of my lawes nothynge be adnulled.
But thanne to thy purpoſe / ſuche iangelers
and loſers / and wayters of games / if the
thynke in aught they mowe dere/ yet loue wel
alwaye/ and ſette hem at naught / and lette
thy porte ben lowe in euery wightes preſence/
and redy in thyne herte to mayntayne that
thou haſt begonne/and a lytel the fayne with
meekeneſſe in wordes/ and thus with ſleyght
ſhalt thou ſurmount and dequace the puel in
their hertes. And wyſdome yet is to feme ſlye
otherwhyle there a man wol fyght. Thus
with ſuche thynges / the tonges of puel ſhal
ben ſtylled: els fully to graunt thy ful mea-
nynge/ for ſothe euer was and euer it ſhalbe/
that myn enemyes ben aferde to truſte to any
fightynge: and therfore haue thou no cowar-
des herte in my ſeruyce/ no more than ſom-
tyme thou haddeſt in the contrarye/for if thou
diede ſuche iangleres thy viage to make: Vn-
derſtande wel that he that diedeth any rayne
to lowe hys comes/ he ſhal haue than hernes.
alſo he þ is aferde of his clothes/let hym daūce
naked. Who nothyng vndertaketh/ & namely
in my ſeruyce/nothyng atcheuyth. After great
ſtormes þ wether is often mery & ſmothe. Af-
ter moche clatering/there is moſt ſo mynyng:
thus after iangling wordes cometh ſuſtyl
peace/ & be ſtyl. O good lady (qꝺ I thou) ſo
nowe ſo we ſeuen yere paſſed & more/ haue I
graſſed and groubed a fyne/ and with al the
wayes that I coude I ſought to a fed me of
the grape/but fruite haue I none founde. Alſo
I haue thus ſeuen yere ſerued Laban to a wed
ded Rachel his doughter / but blere eyed Lya
is brought to my bedde/ whiche alway engen-
dreth my trne/ and is ful of chyldren in tri-
bulacion & in care: and although the clippyn-
ges and kyſſynges of Rachel ſhalde ſame to
me ſwete/yet is ſhe ſo barayne/that gladneſſe
ne ioye by no way wol ſpringe/ſo that I may
wepe with Rachel/ I may not ben counſayled
with ſolace/ſythen iſſue of myn herteſy deſpe
is fayled. Nowe than I pray that to me ſome
ſtedeen and grace/in this eyght yere/this eigh-
teth mowe to me bothe be ſynneſt and maſ-
ſedey after the ſeuen werkedayes of trauayle/
to folowe the chuſten lawe: and what euer ye
do elſe/that thilke Margaryte be holden ſo la-
dy in your privy chambre/that ſhe in this caſe
to none other perſon be cõmytted. Loke than
(quod ſhe) in this caſe to none other perſon be
cõmytted: Loke than (qꝺ ſhe) thou perſeuer
in my ſeruyce/in whiche I haue the groūded/
that thilke ſloume in thyn enemyes mowe this
on thy perſon be not ſothed: ſo this mā begā
to edefye/but for his foundemēt is bad/ to the
ende may he it not bringe. For meekeneſſe in
cõtenaunce/ with a manly hert in dedes/ and
in longe cõtynuaunce/is the conyſaunce of my
ſeruyce/to al my retynue delputted. What we-
nyſt thou þ me lyſt auaunce ſuche perſons as
ſouen the firſt ſittynges at ſerſtes/the highſt
ſtoles in churches & in hal/ toutynges of peo-
ples in marbettes and fayres/ vnſitdfaſte to
byde in one place any whyle togyder/ wenyng
his owne wyt more excellent than other/ ſeru-
nyng al maner deuyce but his owne: Nay nay
god wot/theſe ſhul nothing prey of my bleſſe.
Truly my maner herte to ſome hath ben/ wol
ſhyp with my bleſſe/ Lyons in the felde/ and
lambes in chambre/ Egles at aſſaute & mayd
dens in halle/ foyers in counſayle/ fyſt in this
dedes/ & their protection is granted redy in eu-
a budge/ & their banet is arered fayre wakeno
the felde. Thus by theſe wayes ſhal men be
manned: eſpecyp of Dauid þ ſtony kynge
of Iſ-

of Hector was drawen vp in to the order of Knyghtly gouernaunce/ and Iupiter from a bole to ben Europes fere/ and Iulius Cesar from the lo west begger in Rome/ to be mayster of al cristyn pleies/ and Lucan from Hell to be kyng of the counte there Rome is now we stondyng. And so to the I say/ thy grace by seruyng therafter/ may set the vp suche pynacle/ that no tauglyng may gruue the left lusse of thy hemes/ that are thine iangles/ to not to counte at a cresse in thy displesaunce.

QVer (quod she) hath the people in this worlde deserued to haue had great name in worthynesse/ and hated soule to beare any fame/ and that to one of the obiections thou alegest to be ayen thyne herte ly deserte. ye forsoothe (qõ I) and that so concely the people wol lye/ & bring about suche infame. How we (qõ she) if men with leasynges put on the infame/ wenest thy false herte ben enpeyred: that wrongis wrought/ se why: for as moche as they seen thy merytes encreaseth/ and make the ben more worthy to ben that one wey of þ the seth/ by what thyng thou art apeyred/ þ in so muchel thou arte encreased of thy beloued frendes: and soothly a wounde of thy frende to the lasse harme/ ye sir/ and better than a false flyssyng in deseyuable glosyng of thyne enemye/ about that thay to be wel with thy frede makith suche infame. Ergo thou arte encreased and not apeyred. Lady (qõ I) soothsyne yet if it may be ay disease/ the estimacion of the enuyous people ne loseth nothyng to deserten of men/ ne to the merytes of their doynges/ but only to the auenture of fortune/ and therafter they penen their sentence: and some for ben the voluntary wyl in this herte/ and therafter talketh the argument/ not taking hede to reason ne to the qualite of the doyng/ as thus. If a man be ryche and fulfylle with worldly welfulnesse/ some commendeth it/ and sayne it is so fynde by inste cause: and he that hath deserued thilke anoye. The contrarye of these thynges some men holden also/ and sayne that in the ryche prosperite is perauenture ay to the mysdoyng/ and vpon this matter/ many auctoures of many and great wytted clerkes they alegen. And some men sayn/ thoughe al good estymacion forsaken folk that ben obscurste/ yet is it merye and encrease of his blysse/ so that these purposes arne so wonderful in vnderstondyng/ that trewly for myn obscurste nowe I not howe the sentence of the indifferent people wyl iuge my fame. Therfore (quod she) if any wyght shulde yeue a trewe sentence on suche maters/ the cause of the best ease maist thou se wel/ vnderstande therupon after what ende it drawith/ that is to sayne good or badde/ so ought it to haue his fame/ or by goodnesse infame by badnesse: for euery reasonable person/ & namely of a wyse man/ his wytte ought not without reason to some herde/ sodainly in a mater to iuge. After the sawes of the wise/ thou shalt not iuge ne deme to forne thou knowe. Lady (quod I) ye remembre wel that in moste laude and prayssyng of certayne sayntes in holy churche/ is to reherse their conuersion from badde in to good/ & that is so rehersed/ as by a perpetual myrrour of remembraunce in worshyppynge of the sayntes/ and good ensample to other misdoers in amendement. Howe turned the romayne zedeoryes fro the romaynes/ to be with Hanybal ayenst his kynde nacion: and afterwardes him semyng the romayns to be at the nexte degree of confusyon/ turned to his olde alyes/ by whose wytte after was Hanybal discomfyted. Therfore to enfourme you lady the maner why I meane/ se nowe in my youth I was drawe to ben assentaunt and in my maysters helpyng to certayn contractions/ and other great maters of ruling of cytezens/ and thilke thynges ben my drawers in/ & enclouren to the maters were so payntes and coloured/ that at the prime face/ me semed they noble and glorious to al the people. Wherof wenyng myself merytt haue deserued in their seruyng and mayntenaunce of the thynges/ desyred and sekoured with al my diligence/ in werkynge of thylke maters to the ende. And trewly lady to tel you the sothe/ me thought a spirit of any hate of the mighty fortune/ in thilke cyte/ ne of commones malyce/ so I supplie. Dat when I had consente to ben in

ſuche plyte/that bothe profyte were to me and to my frendes. Another was for cõmen profyte in comynalte is not but peace and tranquylite/with iuſt gouernaunce proceden from thylke profyte/ſythen by counſayle of myne inwytte/ me thought the firſte payned thynges/ malyce and puel meanynge/ withouten any good auayling to any people:and of tyrannye purpoſed/and ſo for pure ſore we and of my medlynge and badde infame that I was in ronne/ tho teeres laſſhed out of myne eyen/ were thus awaye waſſhe/ than the vnder hydde malyce and the rancoure of purpoſynge enuye fornecaſte and ymagyned/ in diſtruction of moſyl people/ſhewed ſo openly/ that had I ben blynde/ with myne hondes al the circumſtaunce I myght wel haue feled.

Nowe than tho perſones that ſuche thynges haue caſte to redreſſe/ for wrathe of my firſt medlynge/ ſhopen me to dwel in this ypnande pryſon/ tyl Lachaſes my threde no lenger wolde twyne. And euer I was ſought/if me lyſte to haue grace of my lyfe/and freneſſe of that priſon/ I ſhulde openly confeſſe how we peace myght ben enduſed to enden al the firſte rancours. It was fully ſuppoſed my knowyng to be ful in tho maters. Than ſaid I thought that euery man that by any waye of right/ rightfully done/ maye helpe any comune helpe to ben faued/ whiche thynge to kepe aboue al thynges I am holde to maynteyne/and namely in diſtroyeng of a wrong/ al ſhulde I therthrough empeche myn owne fere/if he were gylty/and to do miſdede aſſentaunt. And mayſter ne frende maye nought auayle to the ſoule of him that in falſneſſe depeth/and alſo that I nere deſyred wrathe of the people/ ne indignacion of the worthy/ for nothynge that euer I wrought or dyd/in any doyng my ſelfe eke/ but in the maynteinaunce of theſe forſayd errours/ and in kydynge of the pumperes therof. And that al the peoples herte holdynge on the errours ſyde/ weren blynde and of elde ſo ſerſouthe begyled/ that debate and ſtryfe they mayntayned/ and in deſtruction on that otherſyde/by whiche cauſe the peace/that moſte in comunalte ſhulde be deſyred/ was in poynte to be broken and abnulled. Alſo the cyte of London/ that is to me ſo dere and ſwete/ in whiche I was fouthe growen/ and more kyndely loue haue I to that place than to any other in erthe/as euery kyndely creature hath ful appetyte to that place of his kyndly engendrure/ and to wyne reſte and peace in that ſtede to a byde: thylke peace ſhulde thus there haue ben broken/ and of al wyſe it is cõmended and deſyred. For knowe thynge it is/ al men that deſyren to comen to the perfyte peace euer laſtyng/ muſt the peace by god cõmended/ bothe maynteyne and kepe. This peace by angels voyce was confyrmed/ our god entrynge in this worlde. This as for his Teſtamẽt he left to al his frẽdes/ whanne he retourned to the place from whence he came: this his Apoſtel amoneſteth to holden/ without whiche man perfytely may haue noute inſyght. Alſo this god by his comyng/ made not peace alone betwene heuenly and erthly bodyes/ but alſo amonge be on erthe/ ſo he peace confyrmed/ that in one herd of loue/one body we ſhulde perſourme. Alſo I trẽmble me wel how the name of Athenes was rather after the god of peace than of batayle/ ſhewynge that peace moſte is neceſſarye to comunalties and cytes. I than ſo ſtyred by al theſe wayes to ſome nempned/ declared certayne poyntes in this wyſe. Furſte that thilke perſones that hadden me drawen to their purpoſes/and me not wetyng the puny entent of their meanynge/drawen alſo the feeble wytted people/ that haue none inſyght of gubernatyfe prudence/ to clamure and to crye on maters that they ſtyred/ and vnder poyntes for comune auauntage/ they enbolded the paſſyfe to take in the actyues doyngs/ and alſo ſtyred innocentes of conuyng to crye after thynges/ whiche (quod they) may not ſtande but we ben ſpectatours of tho maters/ and auctoute of execucion by comen election to be be deſyred/ and that muſte entre by ſtrength of your mayntenaunce/ for we out of ſuche degree put/ oppreſſyon of theſe olde hyndres ſhal agayne ſurmounten and putten you in ſuch ſubiection/ that I endeſſe we ye ſhal complayne. The gouernementes (quod they) of your cyte ſeſte in the handes of ſa-

cente

tenacious cytezyns shal bringe in pestylence and distruction to you good men/ and therfore let vs haue the comune administracion to abate suche pryde. Also (quod they) it is worthy the good to cõmende/ and the gylty beserue to chastise. There ben cytezens many for feare of execucion that shal be doone/ for extremous by hem corrupted/ ben euer more ayenst these purposes/ and al other good meanynges. Neuer the latter lady/ trewly the meanynge vnder these wordes/ was fully to haue opened the mighty senatoures/ whiche sadden heauy herte for the misgouernaunce that they sen. And so lady whan it fel that free election/ by great clamour of moche people/ for great disease of misgouernaunce so feruently stoden in her election/ that they hem submytted to euery maner face/ rather than haue suffred the maner and the rule of the hated gouernours/ not withstandynge that in the contrary holden moche comune meyny that haue no consideracion/ but onely to vo luntary lustes/ withouten reason. But than thylke gouernaunce so forsaben/ sayinge to some his vnboynge for mistrule in his tyme/ shope to haue letted thalke electyon/ and haue made a newe him selfe to haue ben chosen/ and vnder pmoupt tore haue arered. These thynges lady knowen amonge the pumces/ and made open to the people/ diaweth in amendement/ that euery degree shal ben ordayned to stande there as he shulde/ and that of extraty comyng hereafter/ men may lightly to some hande purnaye remedye/ in this wyse peace and rest to be furthered and holde. Of the whiche thynges lady/ thylke persones thoughten in answere to some there moste sourayne lugr/ not coarted by payinge dutes/ openly knowlegeden/ and asked therof grace/ so that apertely it pruueth my wordes ben sothe/ without forgynge of leasynges.

But nowe it greueth me to remembre these byuers sentences/ in iangelynge of these slepy people: certes me thynketh they oughten to maken hope that a sothe maye be knowe. For my trouthe and my conscience ben wytnesse to me sothe/ that this knowynge sothe haue I sayde for no harme ne malyce of tho persones/ but onely for trouthe of my sacrament in my seigeaunce/ by whiche I was charged on my synges behalfe. But se ye not nowe lady/ how the felonous thoughtes of this people/ and couyns of wicked men/ conspyren ayen my sothfast trouth. Se ye not euery wight that to these erronyous opinyõs were assentaunt and helpes to the noyse/ and knewen al these thynges better than I my selue/ apparayled to fynden newe frendes/ and cleapen me false/ and studyen howe they mowen in her mouthes werse plyte nempne. O god what maye this be/ that thylke folke whiche that in tyme of my mayntenaũce/ and whan my might auayled to stretch to ꝑ forsayd maters/ tho me cõmended/ and pane me name of trouth/ in so manyfolde maners that it was nyghe in euery wightes eere/ there as any of thilke people weren: and on the other syde/ thilke company somtyme passed/ peinge me name of badde loos. Nowe bothe tho peoples turned the good in to badde/ and badde in to good/ whiche thyng is wonder/ that they knowynge me sayng but sothe/ arne nowe tempted to reply her olde prayspnges/ and knowen me wel in al doynges to ben trewe/ and sayne openly that I false haue sayd many thynges. And they alleged nothynge me to ben false or vntrewe/ saue thilke mater knowleged by the parties hem selfe: and god wote other mater is none. Ye also lady knowe these thynges for trewe/ I auaunte not in prayspng of my selfe/ therby shulde I lese the precious perre of my conscience. But ye se wel that false opinyon of the people for my trouthe/ in tellyng out of false conspyred maters/ and after the iugement of these clerkes/ I shulde not hyde the sothe of no maner person/ mayster ne other/ Wherfore I wolde not drede/ were it put in the conspderation of trewe and of wyse. And for comers hereafter shullen fully out of den were/ al the sothe knowe of these thinges in acte/ but as they werne I haue put it in scripture/ in perpetuel remembraunce of true meanynge. For trewly lady me semeth/ that I ought to beare the name of trouthe/ that for

the loue of right wyſnesſe haue thus me ſub-
mytted: But now than the falſe fame which
that clerkes ſayne flyeth as faſte as dothe the
fame of trouthe / ſhal ſo wyde ſprede / tyl it be
brought to the rewel that I of meane / and ſo
ſhal I ben hyndred withouten any meaſure
of trouthe.

Than gan Loue ſadly me beholde /
and ſayd in a changed voyce / lower
than ſhe had ſpoken in any tyme.
Fayne wolde I (qõ ſhe) that thou were hol-
pen / but haſte thou ſayd any thynge whiche
thou myght not proue? Parde (quod I)
the perſones / euery thyng as I haue ſayd / han
ſuo wieged hem ſelfe. Yea (qõ ſhe) but what
if they hadden nayed / howe wolde ſt thou haue
mayntened it. Sothely (quod I) it is wel
wyſte bothe amongeſt the greateſt / and other
of the realme / ỹ I profered my body ſo large-
ly in to pronynge of tho thynges / that Mars
ſhulde haue iuged the ende: but for ſothneſſe
of my wordes they durſte not to thyue iuge
truſte. Nowe certes (quod ſhe) aboue al ſa-
mes in this worlde / the name of martial do-
ynges moſte pleaſen to ladyes of my lore / but
ſythen thou were redy / and thyne aduerſaryes
in thy preſence refuſed thilke doyng / thy fame
ought to be ſo borne / as if in dede it had take
to the ende. And therfore euery wight that a-
ny droppe of reaſon hath / and herketh of the in-
fame / for theſe thynges hath this anſwere to
ſaye: trewly thou ſayde ſt for thyne aduerſa-
ryes thy wordes affirmed. And if thou had-
deſt lyed / yet are they diſcomfyted / the puſe lea
ned on thy ſyde / ſo that fame ſhal holde do wn
infame / he ſhal bynge vpon none halſe.
What greueth the thyne enemye to fayne their
owne ſhame / as thus: We arne diſcomfyted /
and yet our quarel is trewe. Shal not the
loos of thy frendes ayenward dequare thilke
enfame / and ſaye they graunted a ſothe with-
out a ſtroke or fightig. Many men in batayle
ben diſcomfyted and ouercome in a right ful
quarel / that is goddes pryny iugement in he-
uen: but yet although the partie be polden / he
may with wordes ſaye his quarel is trewe /
and to pelde him in the contrarye for drede of
dethe / he is compelled: and he that graunteth
and no ſtroke hath feled / he maye not crepe a-
way in this wyſe / by none excuſacion. Indeſ-
ferent folke wyl ſay / ye who is trewe / who is
falſe / him ſelfe ſuo wieged tho thinges. Thus
in euery ſyde fame ſheweth to the good and
no badde. But yet (qõ I) ſome wyl ſay I ne
ſhulde ſo no dethe haue diſcouered my may-
ſtreſſe / and ſo by vnſyndneſſe they wol ſtudie
unfame to purſue me aboute: thus enuyes
of wyl in manyfolde maner wol ſerche pryny
ſerpentynes queyntyſes / to quenche and de-
ſtroye by deuyſe of many deſpneſſes the light
of truthe / to make hertes to murmure ayenſt
my perſone / to haue me in hayne withou-
ten any cauſe. Nowe (quod ſhe) here me a
fewe wordes / and thou ſhalte fully ben an-
ſwerde I trowe. Me thynketh (quod ſhe)
right nowe by thy wordes / that ſacrament of
ſwearyng / ỹ is to ſay / chargyng by othe was
one of the cauſes to make ỹ diſcouert the mali-
cious ymaginatyons to fore nampned / euery
othe by vnyttynge of copulation muſte haue
theſe lawes / That is trewe iugement & right-
wyſeneſſe / in whiche thynge if any of theſe
lacke / the othe is ytourned in to the name of
periury: than to make a trewe ſerment / moſt
nedes theſe thynges folowe / for oftr tymes a
man to ſaye ſothe / but iugement and iuſtyce
folowe he is forſwome: enſample of Herodes
for holdynge of his ſerment was dampned.

Alſo to ſaye truthe right full ſpeche but vn iu-
gement otherwhile is forboden / by that al ſo-
thes be nat to ſayne. Therfore vn iugement
in truthe and right wiſeneſſe is euery creature
bounden vp payne of periury ful vnowyng
to make / tho it were of his owne perſone for
drede of ſynne / after that worde better is it to
dey than ſyue falſe / and al wolde peruerted
people falſe reporte make in vnſyndneſſe / in
that entent thy fame to tryſe / whan lyght of
truthe in theſe maters is forthe ſprongen / and
openly publyſſhed among cõmens / thou ſhal
nat ſuche derke enfame dare appere for pure
ſhame of his falſneſſe / as ſome me ther ben ỹ
their owne enfame can none other wyſe bolde
or els excuſe / but be hyndunge of other men /

ners

nes fame/ which that by noy other cause/ clea
ny other men false/ but for with their owne
falsnesse me wen they nat ben anamused / or
ells by false sclaundrynge wordes/ other men
shenoyn their owne trewe sclaunder / to mas
ke same the lasse/ for if such men wolden their
eyen of their conscience remolsen/ shulden sene
the same sentence they legen on other/ springe
out of their ydes/ with so many braunches it
were impossyble to nombre. To whiche there
fore maye it be sayd in that thynge/ this may
thou demest/ therin thy selfe thou condempnest
But (quod she) understande nat by these wor
des/ that thou were me sayn the to be worthy
sclaunder/ for any mater to fore written/ true
ly I wolde wytnesse the contrary / but I saye
that the beames of sclaundrynge wordes/ may
nat be done away tyl the daye of dome. For
howe shulde it nat yet amonges so great plen
te of people ben many shrewes/ sithen whan
no mo but eight persons in Noes shippe were
closed/ yet one was a shrewe and sworned his
father. These thynges (quod she) I trowe/
shewen that false fame is nat to drede / ne of
wyse persons to accepte / and namely nat of
thy Margarite / whose wysedom here after I
thynke to declare/ wherfore I wotte wel suche
thynge shal nat her asterte/ than of vnsynde
nesse thyne othe hath the excused at the fulle.
But nowe if thou woldest nat greue/ me lyst
a fewe thynges to shewe. Say on (quod I)
what ye wol/ I trowe ye meane but trouthe/
and my profyte in tyme compynge. Trewly
(quod she) that is sothe/ so thou con wel kepe
these wordes / and in the inrest secre chambre
of thyne herte/ so faste hem close that they ne
wer slytte/ than shalte thou synde hem auay
lynge. Lose nowe what people haste thou ser
ued/ whiche of hem al in tyme of thyne exile
cuer the refreshed / by the valewe of the lesse
torned plate that walketh in money. Who
was sorye or made any rewth for thy disease:
if they hadden getten their purpose of thy mis
auenture sette they nat an hawe. To whan
thou were emprisonned/ howe faste they hyed
in helpe of thy delyuerannce. I wene of thy
dethe they yeue but lyte: They losed after no
thynge/ but after their owne lustes. And if
thou lyste say the sothe/ al that meyny that in
thes dugge the broughten / losedon rather af
ter thyne helpes/ than the to haue relieued.
Dwey nat yet some of hem money for his
comens? Paydest nat thou for some of her
dispences/ tyl they were tourned out of Se
lande? Who paue the euer ought for any ty
dynge thou madest? yet pardye some of hem
toben money for thy chambre / and putte tho
pens in his purse vnwetynge of the renter.
Lo for which a company thou medlest/ that
neyther the ne them selfe myghten helpe of vn
syndnesse/ nowe they beare the name ỳ thou
supposest of hem for to haue. What myght
thou more haue done than thou dyddest / but
if thou woldest in a false quarel haue ben a
fyndynge martyr? I wene thou sleddest as
longe as thou myght / their pryuite to couns
sayle / whiche thynge thou helest lenger than
thou shuldest. And thilke ỳ ought the money
no penny wolde paye/ they wende thy returne
hadde ben an impossyble. Howe might thou
better haue hem proued / but thus in thy nedy
diseases? Nowe haste thou ensaumple for
whom thou shalte meddle: trewly this lore is
worthe many goodes.
Olte gan Loue to sterne me these wor
des / thynke on my spechе / for trewly
here after it wol do the lyuynge / and howe
so euer thou se Fortune shape her wheele to
tourne/ this meditation by no waye remolue.
For certes fortune sheweth her fayrest/ whan
she thynketh to begyle. And as me thought
here to some thou saydest thy loos in soue/ for
thy right wysenesse ought to be raysed/ shulde
be a lowed in tyme compynge. Thou myght
in sone so the haue/ that loos and fame shul
so ben raysed/ that to thy frendes cōforte/ and
sorowe to thyne enemys endlesse shul endure.
But if thou were ỳ one shepe amonges the
hundred were losse in deserte / and out of the
way hadde erred/ and nowe to the flocke arte
restoored / the shepeherd hath in the no ioye/
and thou ayen to the fourest tourne. But that
right as the sorowe and anguysshe was great
in tyme of thyne out waye goynge/ right so
ioye

ſope and gladneſſe ſhal be doubled to ſene the conuerted/ and nat as Lothes wyfe ayen ſo-ſynge / but hoole comſayle with the ſhepe ſolowynge/ and with them graſſe and herbes gadre. Neuer the latter (quod ſhe) I ſaye nat theſe thynges for no wantruſt that I haue in ſuppoſynge of the other wyſe thanne I ſhulde / For trewly I wotte wel/ that nowe thou arte ſette in ſuche a purpoſe/ out of whiche the ſyſte nat to parte. But I ſaye it/ for many men there bene/ that to ſnowyng of other menes doynges ſetten al their cure/ and lightly deſpyen the badde to clatter rather than the good/ and haue no wyl their owne maner to amende. They alſo hate of olde rancoure lightly haueth/ and there that ſuche thynge abydeth / ſodaynly in their mouthes proceedeth the habundaunce of the herte/ and wordes as ſtones/ ſtones out throwe. Wherfore my coũſayle is euer more openly and apertely / in what place thou ſytte/ countreplete therroures and meanynges/in as ferre as thou hem wyſtyſt falſe/ and leaue for no wyght to make hem be ſnowe in euery bodyes eare/and be al waye patient and vſe Jacobes wordes/ what ſo euer menne of the clappen/ I ſhal ſuſtayne my fadyes wrathe whiche I haue deſerued/ſo longe as my Margarite hath right wyſed my cauſe. And certes (quod ſhe) I wytneſſe my ſelfe/ if thou thus conuerted ſoloweſt in good meanynge in thyne herte/ wolte from al vanyte parfitely departe/in conſolatyoun of al good pleaſaunce of that Margaryte / whiche that thou deſpreſt after wyl of thyne hert/ in a maner of a mothers ppte / ſhal fully accepte the in to grace. For right as thou reteſt clothes in open ſyghte / ſo openly to ſolowe hem at his worſhippe withouten reproſe commended. Alſo right as thou were enſample of moche folde errour/ right ſo thou muſt be enſample of manyfolde correctioun/ ſo good fauour to forgoyng al errour diſtropeng cauſeth dilygent ſoule/ with many playted prayſynges to ſolowe/ and than ſhal al the fyrſte errours make the ſolowynge worſhyppes to ſeme hugely encreaſed/ blacke and white ſette togyder/ euery for other more ſemeth/ and ſo bothe euery thynges contrary in ſynde. But inſame that gothe alwaye tofore/ and prayſynge worſhippe by any cauſe ſolowynge after/ maketh to ryſe the ylle honour in double of welth/ and that quencheth the ſpotte of the fyrſt enſame. Why wenyſte I ſaye theſe thinges/in hyndringe of thy name? Naye nay god wotte/ but for pure encreaſyng worſhyp thy right wyſeneſſe to cõmende/ & thy trouthe to ſene the more. Woſt not wel thy ſelfe/ that thou in fourme of maſing paſſeth not Adam that ete of the apple. Thou paſſeth nat the ſtedfaſtneſſe of Noe/ that eatynge of the grape becume dronke. Thou paſſyſt nat the chaſtyte of Lot/ that lay by his doughter. Eke the nobley of Abraham/ whom god reproued by his pride. Alſo Dauydes meſeneſſe/ whiche for a woman made Vrye be ſlawe. What alſo Hector of Troye/ in whome no defaute myght be ſounde / yet is he reproued that he ne hadde with manhode not ſuffred the warre begon/ne Paris to haue went in to Grece/by whom ganne al the ſorowe: for trewly hym lacketh no vertu of pryue conſentyng/ whiche that openly ſeaueth a wronge to withſay.

Lo eke an olde prouerbe amongꝛe many other/ He that is ſtylle ſemeth as he graunted.

Nowe by theſe enſamples/thou myght fully vnderſtonde/ that theſe thynges ben wrytte to your lernyng/and in right wyſeneſſe of the perſones / as thus: Lo euery wyght his deſaute cõmytted/ made goodneſſe after warieſdone / be the more in reuerẽce and in open ſhewyng/ for enſãple is it nat ſong in holy churche. Lo howe neceſſary was Adams ſynne/ Dauyd the fyng gate Salomon the fyng/of her that was Vryes wyfe. Truly for reproſe is none of theſe thynges wrytte: Right ſo tho I reherce thy before bede / I reporte the more/ne for no vyllany of the are they reherſed/but for worſheppe/ ſo thou conſyrwe wel here after/ and for profyte of thy ſelfe / I rede thou on hem thynke.

Than ſayde I right thus. Lady of layte and accorde / enuy and wrathe furſen there thou comeſt in place / ye wrtey wel your ſelue and ſo done many other/ that whyle I admyniſtred

uffred the offyce of cõmen doynge/ as in rulyng of the stablyssh̃mentes amonges the people / I defouled neuer my conscyence for no maner dede/ but euer by wytte and by counsayle of the wyseste/ the maters were dealwen to their right endes. And thus trewly for your lady I haue desyred suche cure/ and certes in your seruyce wote I nat ydel/ as ferre as suche doynge of my cure stretcheth. That is a thyng (quod she) that may deawe many hertes of noble/ and voice of cõmune in to glory/ and fame is nat but wretched and vyle.

Alas that mã synde coueyteth in so feude a wyse/ to be rewarded of any good dede / suche glour of fame in this worlde/ is nat but synoynge of glorye in tyme cõmynge. And certes (quod she) yet at the hardest suche fame in to heuen/ is nat the erthe but a centre to the cercle of heuen. A pricke is wonder lytel in respecte of al the cercle/ and yet in al this pricke may no name be boune in maner of peersyng for many obstacles/ as waters and wyderuesse/ and straunge langages/ and nat onely names of men ben stylled and holden out of knowlegynge by these obstacles / but also cytees and realmes of prosperite ben letted to be knowe/ and their reason hyndred/ so that they may nowe nat ben parfitely in mennes proper vnderstandynge. Howe shulde than the name of a synguler londemoys passe the glorious name of London/ whiche by many it is commended/ and by many it is lacked/ and in many mo places in erthe nat knowen/ than knowen: for in many countrees lytel is London in knowyng or in speche/ & yet among one maner of people may nat such fame in goodnes cõe/ for as many as prayseth cõmenly as many lacken. Lete thã ay such maner fame/ slepe & suffre how ỳ knoweth ỳpyte of hert/ / to dele suche fame/ in thylke place there nothynge apensil a sothe shal neyther spede ne dare apere/ by attourney ne by other maner. Howe many great named and many great in worthynesse loseth/ han be tofore this tyme/ that nowe out of memorie are slydden and clenely forgeten/ for defaute of writynges/ and yet scriptures for great rede so ben defused/ that no perpetuelte maye in hem ben myed. But if thou woste make comparison to euer/ what hope mayst thou haue in erthly name/ it is a fayre sykernesse/ a pees or one grayne of wheate / to a thousande shippes ful of corne charged. What nombre is betwene the one and thother/ and yet nowe bothe they be nombred/ & ende in reknynge haue. But trewly al that may be nombred/is nothyng to reken/as to thilke that maye nat be nombred/ for ofte thynges ended is made comparison/ as one lytel/ another great/ but in thynges to haue an ende/ & another no ende/ suche comparison may nat be founden. Wherfore in heuen to ben loued with god hath none ende/ but endelesse endureth/ and thou canste nothynge done aright/ but thou despise the rumoure therof be heated and in euery wightes eare/ & that dureth but a pricke/in respecte of the other. And so thou sholdest rewarde of folkes smale wordes / and of vayne prayseynges. Trewly therin thou leesest the guerdon of vertue/ and leesest the greteste valoure of conscience/ and vphap thy renome euerlastyng. Therfore boldely renome of fame of the erthe shulde behated/ and fame after deth shulde be despised/ of werkes of vertue asketh guerdonyng/ and the soule causeth al vertue. Than the soule delyuered out of prisone of erthe/ is most worthy suche guerdone among to haue in the euerlastynge fame/and nat the body that causeth al mannes pryde.

Of twey thynges arte thou answered ame thynketh (quod Loue) and if any thynge be in doute in thy soule/ shewe it forth thyne ignorance to clere/ and leaue it for no shame. Certes (quod I) there ne is no body in this worlde/ that aught conde saye by reason ayenst any of youre sayinges/as I seme/and by my wytte nowe sele I wel/ that yuel speeres or bearers of ensame/may lytel grene or fette my purpose/ but rather by suche thynge my quarel to be fortherred. Yea (qõ she) and it is proued also/ that the ille ieuel in my seruyce shal nat there thorowe be steered/ of the left moment ỳ myght be ymagyned. That is soth (qõ I) Wel (qõ she) than semeth there/to declare ỳ thy mysusyng is no maner letting

as

as thus/ for that she is so worthy thou shuldest not clymbe so highe/ for thy moebles and thyne estate arne bouded/ thou thynkest falsely in suche myserie/ that gladnesse of thy pursute wol nat on the discende. Certes (quod I) that is sothe: right suche thought is in myne hert/ for comenly it is spoken/ & for an olde prouerbe it is leged: He that heweth to hye/ with chyppes he maye lese his syght. Wherfore I haue ben about in al that euer I myght/ to studye wayes of remedye by one syde or by another. Nowe (quod she) god forbede art thou sehe any other doynges/ but suche as I haue lerned the in our restynge whyles/ and suche herbes as ben planted in oure gardyns. Thou shalte wel vnderstãde/ that aboue may is but one god alone. Howe (qd I) han men to some this tyme trusted in writtes and chauntementes/ and in helpes of spirites that dwelleth in the ayre/ and therby they han getten their desyres/ where as first for al his manly power he daunced behynde.

O (quod she) fye on suche maters/ for trewly that is sacrilege/ and that shal haue no sort with any of my seruantes/ in myne eyen shal suche thynge nat be loked after. Howe often is it cõmaunded by these passed wyse/ that to one god shal men serue/ and nat to goddes. And who that lyste to haue myne helpes/ shal aske none helpe of foule spirites. Alas/ is nat man maked semblable to god: woste thou nat wel that al vertue of lyuelych werkynge by goddes purueyaunce is vnderputte to resonable creature in erthe/ is nat euery thynge a thishalfe god: made bycome to mannes cõtemplation/ vnderstandynge in heuen and in erthe/ and in helle. Hath not manne beynge with stones/ soule of weyyng with trees and herbes. Hath he nat soule of felynge/ with beestes/ fysshes/ and foules/ and he hath soule of reason and vnderstandyng with aungels/ so that in him is bryngte al maner of syuenges by a resonable proporcioun. Also man is made of al the foure elementes. Al myserystyer is reuemed in hym alone: he hath vnder god principalite aboue al thynges. Nowe in his soule here/ nowe a thousande myle hence/ nowe serue nowe nygh/ nowe hye nowe lowe/ as ferre in a moumente/ as in mannes mynde of twene wynter/ and al this is in maners ordenaunce and dispostyon. Thus sheweth it/ that men ben sythe vnto goddes/ and chyldren of moost heyght. But nowe sythen al thynges vnderputte to the wyl of resonable creatures/ god forbede any man to wynne that lordshippe/ and aske helpe of any thynge lower than hym selfe/ & than namely of foule thyng/ innommable. Now thã why shuldest thou wene to loue to highe/ sythen nothynge is the aboue but god alone. Trewly I woste wel/ that thylke iewel is in a maner cuyn in lyne of degree there thou arte thy selue/ and nought aboue/ saue thus. Aungel vpon angel/ manne vpon manne/ and deuyl vpon deuyl/ han a maner of soueraygnte/ and that shal cease at the daye of doome: and so I say/ thoughe thou be putte to serue the deuyl in wel durynge thy lyfe/ yet is that no seruage of vnderputtynge/ but a maner of transplyng plesaunce/ to conquere and gette that thou hast nat. I sette nowe the hardest/ in my seruice nowe thou deydest for sorowe of wantynge in thy desyres: trewly al heuenly bodyes with one voyce shal come and make mesiody in thy comynge/ and saye welcome oure fere/ and worthy to entre in to Iuppiters wyne/ for thou with myght haste ouercome dethe/ thou wouldest neuer flytte out of thy seruyce/ and we al shul nowe pray to the goddes to we by to we to make thilke Margarite ꝑ no vouth had in this persone/ but vnsyndely without comforte lette the depe/ shal besette her selfe in suche wyse/ that in erthe for parte of vengeaunce/ shal she no more haue in soules seruyce/ and whan she is dede/ than shal her soule be brought vp in to thy presence/ and whyder thou wylte chese/ thilke soule shal ben committed. Dr els after thy dethe anone al the forsayd heuenly bodyes by one accorde/ shal benõmen from thylke perle/ al the vertues that sirste her were taken/ for she hath ben forfeyted/ by that on the my seruaunt in thy lyue she wolde not suffre to wasche al vertues withdrawyn/ by myght of the hyghe bodyes: Why than shuldest thou wene so my moche. And if thou lyste to looke vpon the lawe

of Pynde/

of hynde/ and with oder whiche to me was adapted/ fothly none age/ none ouertoure yage tyme/ but hytherto had no tyme ne powr to chaunge the wedding/ ne the knotte to vnbynde of two hertes thos we one assent in my presence/ togyther accorded to endurry tyl dethe hem departe. What trowest thou euery poret wotte the meanynge and the pryuy entent of these thynges? they wene forsothe that suche accorde may not be/ but the rose of maydenhede be plucked/ do waye do waye/ they knowe nothyng of this: for consente of two hertes a lone/ maketh the fastenynge of the knotte/ neyther lawe of hynde ne mannes lawe/ determyneth neyther the age ne the qualyte of persones/ but onely accorde betwene thylke twaye. And trewly after tyme that suche accorde by their consent in hert is encreased and put in my tresorye amonges my pryuy thynges: than gynneth the name of spousayle/ and although they breaken forwarde bothe/ yet suche mater enclosed is kepte in remembraunce for euer. And se nowe that spouses haue the name anoy after accorde/ though the rose be not take. The aungel bade Joseph take Marye his spouse/ and to Egypte wende: Lo she was cleped spouse/ and yet tofore ne after neyther of hem bothe mente no fleshly lust vnto we/ wherfore the wordes of trouthe accorden/ that my seruauntes shulden forsake bothe father and mother/ and be adherande to hir spouse/ and they two in vnyte of one flesshe shulden accorde. And this wyse two that werne fyrste in a lyked maner disacordaunt/ hyghet that one and lowet that other/ ben made enemyche in gree to stonde. But nowe to ensourme the that ye ben lyche to goddes/ these clerkes sayne/ and in determynacion sheweth/ that thre thynges haueth the names of goddes ben escaped/ that is to sayn: mawmet/ idole/ and ymages/ but yet is there but one god/ of whom al goodnesse/ al grace/ and al vertue cometh/ and he his louyng & trewe/ and euerlastyng/ and prime cause of al beyng thynges: but men ben goddes/ louynge and trewe/ but not euerlastyng/ and that is by adopcyon of the euerlastynge god. Idoles ben goddes/ spekynge by a maner of speeche/ but neyther ben they trewe ne euerlastynge/ and therr name of godlyhed thy han by vsurpacion/ as the prophete sayth: Al goddes of gentyles/ that is to say paynyms/ are idoles. But ymages ben goddes by nuncupacion/ and they ben neyther spekynge ne trewe/ ne euerlastynge: After these wordes they cleapen goddes ymages wrought with mennes handes. But nowe reasonable creature/ that by adoption atone arte to the great god euerlastynge/ and therby thou arte god cleped: lette thy fathers maners so entre thy wyttes/ that thou myght folowe/ in as moche as longeth to the thy fathers worshyppe/ so that in nothynge thy hynde from his wyl declyne/ ne from his nobley peruerte. In this wyse if thou werche/ thou arte aboue al other thynges saue god alone/ and so say no more thyn herte to serue in to hye a place.

Fully haue I nowe declared thyn estate to be good/ so thou folow therafter/ and that the obiection fyrst be the aleged in worthynesse of thy Margarye shal not the lette/ as it shal forther the/ and encrease the/ it is nowe to declare/ þ last obiection in nothing may greue.

Yes certes (qð I) bothe greue and let muste it nedes/ the contrarye maye not ben proued/ and se nowe why. Whyle I was glorious in worldly welfulnesse/ and had suche goodes in welth as many men ryche/ tho was I drawe in to companyes that loos/ pryse/ and name yeuen: tho louteden flasours/ tho curryden glosours/ tho welcomeden flatterers/ tho worshypped thylke/ that nowe deynen nat to loke. Euery wight in such erthly wele habundant/ is holde noble/ pierrous/ benigne/ and wyse to do what he shal/ in any degree that men hym set/ al be it that the sothe be in the contrarye of al tho thynges: But he that can/ ne neuer so wel him behaue/ and hath vertue habundant in manyfolde maners/ & be not welthed with suche erthly goodes/ is holde for a foole/ and sayd his wytte is but sotted. Lo so is false for auer is holde trewe. Lo howe trewe is cleped false for wantyng of goodes. Also lady/ dignytees of office many men myght nowe nombred as thus: he is so good/ were he out his pow

shal

shulde men not fynde. Trewly I trowe of some suche that are so praysed/ were they out ones/another shulde make hym so be knowe/ he shulde of no wyse no more ben loked after: but onely fooles wel I wotte/ despyen suche newe thynges. Wherfore I wonder that thilke gouernour/ out of whome alone the causes procedeth/ that gouernen al thynges/ whiche that hath ordeyned this worlde in werkes of the kyndely bodyes so be gouerned/ not with vnstedfast or happyous thyng/ but with rules of reason/ whiche shewen the course of certayne thynges: why suffreth he suche slydyng chaunges/ that maturnen suche noble thynges as ben we men/ that arne a fayre parsel of the erthe/ and holden the vpperest degre vnder god of benigne thinges/as ye sayden right nowe your selfe/ shulde neuer may haue ben set in so worthy a place/ but if his degre were ordayned noble. Alas/thou that knyttest the purueyaunce of al thynges/ why lokest thou not to amenden these defautes: I se shrewes that han wicked maners/ spotten in chayres of domes/ lambes to pumysshen/ there wolues shulden ben punisshed. Lo vertue shyneth naturelly/ for peerne lurketh and is hyde vnder cloude: but the moone false for worne/ as I knowe my selfe/ for auer̄ pestes hath vsurped to shyne by day light/ with peynture of other mens prayseinges: and trewly thilke forged fyre foule shulde fade / were the trouth away of colours feyned. Thus is nyght turned in to daye/ and daye in to night / wynter in to sōmer / and sōmer in to wynter/ not in dede/ but in misceapyng of folyche people.

Nowe (quod she) what weenest thou of these thinges: how feelest thou in thy hert/ by what gouernaunce that this cometh aboute?

Certes (qd I) that wotte I neuer/ but if it be that fortune hath graunt from about/ to lede the ende of men as her lyketh. Ah nowe I se (quod she) thentent of thy meanyng: Lo bycause thy worldly goodes ben fullyche dispent/ thou beraste out of dignite of office/ in whiche thou madest the gatheryng of thilke goodes/and yet lyddest in that office by coun̄saile of wyse/any thing were ended: and true were vnto hem/ whose prosperite thou shuldest lose/ and seest nowe many that in thilke herneste made of the mosel/and nowe for glosing of other/deyneth the nought to forther/but maunsen false shrewes / by wytnessyng of trouthe. These thynges greueth thyn herte to sene thy selfe thus avated/and than fraylte of mannyssh̄e ne setteth but lytel by the lesers of suche rychesse/haue he neuer so moche vertue/ and so thou weenest of thy iewel to trume in dyspyte/ and not ben accepted in to grace: Al this shal the nothing hynder. Nowe (qd she) first thou woste wel thou lokest nothyng that euer mightest thou chalenge for thyn owne: Whan nature brought the forthe / come thou not naked out of thy mothers wombe? thou haddest no rychesse/ and whan thou shalt entre in to the ende of euery flesshly body/ what shalt thou haue with the than? So euery rychesse thou haste in tyme of thy lyuynge/ nys but lente/thou might therin chalenge no proprete. And se nowe euery thing that is a mannes owne/ he may do therwith what him lyketh/to yeue or to kepe: but richesse thou playnest from the lest/ if thy might had stretched so ferforth/ fayne thou wouldest haue ben kept multyplied with mo other: and so ayenst thy wyl ben they departed from the / wherfore they were neuer thyn. And if thou laudest & ioyest any wight/ for he is stuffed with suche manr̄ richesse/ þ arte in that beleue begiled/ for thou weenest thilke ioye to be selynesse or ese/ & he that hath loste suche happes to ben vnsely. Ye forsoth (qd I). Wel (qd she) than wol I proue that vnsely in that wise is to preise/ & so the tother is the cōtrary to be lacked. Howe so (qd I) For vnsely (qd she) begyleth nat/ but sheweth thentent of her worshyng. Et cōtra. Selynesse begyleth/ for in prosperite she maketh a rape in vsyndnesse/ that is she wyndeth him to make sorowe whan she withdraweth. Wolte thou nat (qd she) preise him better that sheweth to the his herte/tho it be with vylande wordes & despitous/ thā him that gloseth & thinketh in their absence to do the many harmes. Certes (qd I) the one is to cōmende/ & the other to lacke & dispice. Ah (qd she) right so ease whole he lasteth/ gloseth & flatereth/ & kyndely hopeth whan she most plesantly sheweth/

and

and euer in her absence she is about to do the true and soothe in herte: but vnsely al be it with vplande chere/ she weth what she is/ and so doth not that other/ wherfore vnsely dothe not begyle. Ielousse disceyueth: vnsely put a wrye doute. That one maketh men blynde/ that other openeth their eyen in the wynge of wretchednesse. The one is ful of drede to lese that he not has owne: that other as sobre and maketh men discharged of moche heuynesse in barthen. The one draweth a man from be ty good/ the other haleth hym to vertue by the hoodes of thoughtes. And wenyst thou nat that thy disease hath done the moche more to wynne/ than euer yet thou lostest? and more than euer the contrary made the wynne. Is nat a great good to thy thynking/ for to know the herte of thy fothfast frendes. Pardy they ben proued to the ful/ and the trewe haue discouered from the false. Trewly at the goynge of the pore riotel hope/ ther pede no more a waye/ than the pore that was nat thyne prosper: he was neuer from that vpgytly departed/ thyne owne good therfore leaueth it stylle with the. Nowe good (quod she) for howe moche wolderst thou sometyme haue bought/ thes berry knowyng of thy frendes/ from the flatterynge flyes that the glosed/ whan thou thought thy selfe sely. But thou that playnest of losse in spyrytuelle/ hast founden the moste derr worthy thynge that thou clepest vnsely/ hath made the moche thynge to wynne. And also for conclusyoun of al/ he is frende that nowe leaueth nat his hert from thyne helpes. And if that Margarite denyeth nowe nat to suffre her vertues shyne to the wardes/ with spreadynge beames/ as farre as farther than if thou were selfe in worldly hope: trewly I saye nat els but she is soundest to blame.

Ah/ peace (quod I) and speke no more of this/ myne herte breaketh/ nowe thou touchest any suche wordes. A wel (quod she) thanne lette be synging/ thou herest no more of these thynges at this tyme.

¶ Thus endeth the fyrste booke of the Testament of Loue/ and hereafter folowyth the seconde.

VEry weith may not be founden in al this worlde/ and that is wel sene: Lo howe in my moyste comforte/ as I wende and moost supposed to haue hadde ful answere of my contrary thoughtes/ sodaynly it was vanysshed. And al the workes of many farey in the same wyse/ whan folke wenen best her entent for to haue/ and wyllen to persourme/ anone chaungyng of the lyft syde to the ryght haue/ tourneth it so clene in to another synde/ that neuer shal it come to the fyrst plyte in doynge.

O this wrongful steerynge so soone otherwyse out of knowynge/ but for my purpose was at my begynnynge/ and so dureth yet/ if god of his grace tyme wol me graunt/ I thynke to persourme this worke/ as I haue begonne in loue/ after as my thynne wytte/ with inspyracion of hym that hyldeth al grace wol suffre. Greuously god wotte haue I suffred a great throwe that the romayne emperour/ whiche in vnyte of loue shulde acorde and euery with other/ in cause of other to assaunce/ and namely sythe thus emprye to be corrected of so many sectes in heresie/ of faith/ of scripture/ o rule in loues religyon. Trewly al were it but to shende errouyous opinyons/ I maye it no lenger suffre: for many mennes there ben that sayne loue to ben in grauel and sande/ that with see ebbynge and flowynge wo weth/ as riuers that sodaynly vanysshith. And some sayn that loue shulde be in wyndy blastes/ that stoundmele turneth as a vane/ and gloue of renome/ whiche after fusyes of the varyaunt people is areyed or stylled. Many also wenen that in the sonne and the moone/ and other sterres/ loue shulde ben sothfastly/ for amonge al other planettes maste sothfastly they shynen/ as dignytees in reuerence of estates rather than good hem and accuppen. Ful many also there ben that in abes and in huge postes supposen loue to ben greatdeed/ as in strength & in myght/ whiche wo wen not helpen their owne wretchednesse/ whan they gynne to fal. But suche dyuersyte of

Now to. sectes

sectes ayenst the rightful byleue of lowr these errours hey for the spredde/ that loues seruantes in trewe rule and stedfaste fayth/ in no place darne apere: Thus irrecuperable ioy is went/ and anoy endlesse is entred. for no may aright reproueth suche errours/ but conspyres mey their wordes/ and sayn that badde is noble good/ and goodnesse is badde: to whiche solue the prophete byddeth/ Wo without ende.

Also manye tonges of great falsse techynges in gylynge manet/ principally in my tymes/ not onely with wordes/ but also with armes/ loues seruauntes and professe in his religion of trewe rule/ pursewen to confounden and to distroyen. And for as moche as holy fathers/ that our chusten fayth aproued and strengthed to the iewes/ as to mey resonable/ and of disputte lerned/ proued thilke fayth with resones/ and with auctoriten of the olde testament & of the newe/ her pertynacie to distroy: But to papynms/ that for berfles and hounds were holde/ to put hem out of their errour/ was myracles of god shewed. These thynges were fygured by compnge of thangel to the shepeherdes/ and by the sterre to papynms kynges/ as who sayth: angel resonable to resonable creature/ and sterre of myracle to people bestyal not lerned/ wernе sent to enforme. But I louers derke in al my counpng and with al my mightes/ trewly I haue no suche grace in vertue of myracles/ ne for no disconfyte falsheedes/ suffyseth not auctorytes a soule/ sythen that suche heretykes and maintaynours of falsytes. wherfore I wotte wel sythen that they hen mey/ and reason is aproued in hem/ the clowde of errour hath her reason be wonde probable resons/ whiche that catchende wytte rightfully may not withstte. By inpetuouspynge studye I haue ordeyned hem/ with that auctorite misgloseb by mannes reason/ to graunt shal be endured.

Nowe gynneth my penne to quake/ to thinken on the sentences of the enuyous people/ whiche al wape hen redy/ bothe ryder and goer to shome and to tape this lende booke/ and me for rancoure and hate in their herten they shullen so dispyse/ that although my booke be lende/ yet shal it hen more lende holden/ and by wicked wordes in many manet apayred. Lettes me thynketh the sowne of their badde speche/ tryght nowe is ful bothe inpne eeres. O good precious Margarye/ inpne herte shulde wepe if I wyste pe tolden hede of suche maner speche/ but trewly I wotte wel in that pour wysdome shal not afterte. For of good maner of synde wytnesse I take/ that for none enuy ne yuel haue I drawe this mater togyder/ but only for goodnesse to maintayn/ and errours in falsetes to distroy. Wherfore (as I sayd) with reason I thynke/ thilke for sayd errours to distroye and dequace.

These reasons and suche other/ if they enduce men in soues seruyce/ trewe to beleue of parfyte blysse/ yet to ful faithe in credence of desserte/ fully nowe they nat suffyse/ sithen faith hath no merryte of mede/ whan manues reason sheweth cyperpence in doyng. For bterly no reason the parfyte blysse of loue by no wape maye make to be comprehended. Lo what is a perfet of louers ioye/ parfyte science in good seruyce/ of their desyre to comprehende in bodily doynge the kynynge of the soule/ not as by a glasse to haue contemplacion of tyme comynge/ but thilke first ymagynrd and thought/ after face to face in beholdyng: what herte/ what reason/ what vnderstandynge can make his seruen to be feled and knowe without assaye in doynge: certes none. Sythen thanne of loue cometh suche fruite in blysse/ and loue in hym selfe is the most amonge other vertues/ as clerkes sayne: The sede of suche springynge in al places/ in al countreys/ in al worldes shulde ben sowe.

But o welawaye thilke sede to forsake/ and mo wen not ben suffred the londe tylleres to set a werde/ without medlynge of cockle/ badde wedes whiche somtyme sionden/ hath caught the name of soue amonge ydiotes and badde meanynge people. Neuer the later/ yet howe so it be that menne cleape thilke kynge pteaouesest in synde/ with many eke names/ that other thynges/ that the soule yeuen the ryght noble name/ it sheweth wel that in a manet men haue a great kynynge in worshyppynge

of thilke

of thefe names/ wherfore this wulde haue I wuitte/and to the tytled of loues name/ I haue it awe wed in a maner of sacrifyse/ that where euer it be rudde/ it may we in merytte by the excellence of thilke name the more wepe in anthonte and worshyppe of tabynge in fede/ and to what entent it was ordayned/ the matteres me wer bey moued: Euery thynge to whom is a wande ocasyon dome as for his ende/ Aristotle supposith that the artes of euery thynge bey in a maner hes fynal cause. A fynal cause is noblerer or elis euen as noble as thilke thynge that is fynally to thilke ende/ wherfore action of thynge euerlastynge/ is demed to be eternal/ and not temporal/ sythen it is his fynal cause: Right so the artes of my bokes Loue/ and soue is noble/ wherfore though my boke be lewde/ the cause with whiche I am stered/ & for whom I ought it done/ nobleth forthe the bothe. But bycause that in conuynge I am ponge/ and canne yet but crepe/ this lewde A.B.C. haue I sette in to lernynge/ for I can not passen the tellyng of thre as yet: and if god wyl in shorte tyme I shal amende thes lewdnesse in ioynynge syllables/ whiche thynge for dulnesse of wytte I maye not in thise letters declare. For trewly I saye the goodnesse of my Margaryte perle wolde preue mater in endityng to many clerkes: certes her mercy is more to me swetter than any spynages/ wherfore my sypres mowen not suffyse in speknyng of her ful laude and worshyppe as they shulde. But who is that in endytyng of the aders of heuen/ & putteth his resones in the crithe: I forsothe may not with blere eyen/ ? shynyng sone of Vertue in sight whole of this Margaryte beholde/ therfore as yet I maye her not discryue in Vertue as I wolde. In tyme comynge in another tretyse shal me goddes grace/ thus sonne in clerenesse of Vertue to be knowe/ and so we the enlumyneth al this day/ I thynke to declare.

Thus this meane whyle this comfortable lady gaune synge/ a wonder mater of endityng in latyn/ but trewly the noble rosiers in outhouse wyse sayde were so crastely/ that my conuyng wolde not stretche to trewthe/ but the sentence I tro we soundele haue I in mynde. Certes they were wonder swete of sowne/ and they were touched of in fauerable facion wyse/ and by no werbles of myther. Lo thus gaune she synge in latyn/ as I may counterfete it in our englysshe tonge.

Also that these heuenly bodyes their syght and course shewen/ as nature gaue hem in commaundement at the gynnyng of the first age/ But these thynges in fre chepre of reson han none vnderstondynge: but may that ought to passe al thynge of doynge/ of right course in synde/ ouer whelmed sothnesse by wronge ful tyde/ and hath drawen the sterre of enuye to goy by his syde/ that the clypp of me that shulde be his shynande sonne/ so ofte to sey/ that it wened thilke errour thoro we hem come in/ shulde bey myn owne defaute. Trewly therfore I haue me withdrawe/ and made my dwellynge out of lande in an yle by my selfe/ in the ocean closed/ and yet sayne there many they haue me harbero wed/ but god wote they sayen. These thynges me greuen to thynke/ and namely on passed gladnesse/ that in this worlde was wonte me disporte of hyght and lowe/ and now we it is sayed: they that wolden maystries me haue in thilke stoundes. In heuen on hyght aboue Saturnes sphere/ in seasonable tyme were they lodged/ but now come queynte counsaylours that in no house wol suffre me sojourne/ wherof is pyte: and yet sayne some that they me haue in celler with wyne shed/ in gernere there corne is layde/ couered with whete/ in sacke sowed with wolle/ in purse with money faste knytte/ amonge pannes moused in a wyche/ in presse amonge clothes layde with eyche peture araped/ in stable amonge horse & other beestes/ as hogges/ shepe/ and nete/ and in other many wyse. But thou maker of hyght (in wynking of thyn eye the sonne is queynt) woste right wel that I in trewe name was neuer thus herbero wed. Sometyme to forn the sonne in ? seuenth parte was smyten/ I bare both crosse & mytre/ to preue it where I wolde. With me ? pope went a fote/ & I tho was worshyped of al holy church Kynges badey me their crownes holden. The saw was set as it shulde: to fore ? vnge as wel ?

poore burfle shewe his grefe as the ryche/ for al his money. I defended the taylages/ and was redy for the poore to pay. I made great feestes in my tyme/ and noble songes/ and maryed damoselles of gentyl feture/ without ony golde or other rychesse. Poore clerkes for wytte of scholc/ I sette in churches/ and made suche personnes to preache: and tho was scrupee in holy churche honest and demoute/ in pleasaunce bothe of god and of the people. But nowe the leude for synnoure is anaunsred/ and shendeth al holy churche. Nowe is sie warde for his achates/ nowe is courtyour for his debates/ nowe is escheatour for his wronges/ nowe is losel for his songes/ persones and prouendre alone/ with whiche wyne thusty shulde encrease. And yet is this sherwe behynde/ free herte is forsake/ and lowsengeour is take. Lo it acordeth/ for suche there ben that voluntarye lustes haunten in courte with rybaudye/ that tyl myddnight and more wol playe and wake/ but in the churche at matyns he is behynde/ for yuel dispossyon of his stomake: therfore he shulde eate brane bread/ and so dyd his spyr/ his estate ther with to strengthen. His auter is broke/ and so we sythe in poynte to gone to the erthe/ but his horse muste ben easy and hye to beare him ouer great waters. His chaspre poore/ but he hath ryche cuppes. No towayle but a shete there god shal ben handled. And on his meate borde there shal ben borde clother and towelles many payre. At masse serueth but a clergyon: syue squiers in hal. Poore chaunsels/ ben holes in euery syde: bedes of sylke with tappytes goyng al aboute his chambre. Poore masse bokc and leude chapelayne/ and broken surplyce with many an hole: good houndes and many/ to hunte after harte and hare/ to fede in their forstes. Of poore men haue they great care/ for they euer craue/ and nothynge offren/ they wolden haue hem dolsen. But amonge legyftres there dare I not come/ my doynge they sayne maken hem redy/ they ne wolde for nothyng haue me in towy/ for thay were lorst and forthe nought worthe ony hawe about and pleasen no men/ but thilk grenous and lotious ben in myght and in doyng: these thynges to some sayd nowe wel if men lyste synne/ trewly they acorde nothynge. And for as much as al thynges by me shulden of right ben gouerned/ I am sorye to se that gouernaunce fayleth/ as thus: to sene smale and slowe goueme the hye/ and bodres aboue. Certes ȳ polesye is naught/ it is forbode by them that of gouernaunce treaten ȝ reformen. And right as bestly wytte shulde ben subiecte to reason/ so erthly power in it selfe/ the lowe shulde ben subiect to ȳ hygher. What is worth thy body/ but it be gouerned with thy soule: right so lytel or naught is worthe erthely power/ but if stigmatyke prudence in herdes gouerne the smale/ to whiche herdes the smale owen to obey/ and suffre in their gouernaile. But soueraunesse ayenwarde shulde thynke in this wyse: I am seruaunt of these creatures to me delyuered/ not lorde but defendour/ not mayster but enfourmer/ not possessoure but in possessyon/ and to hem lyche a tree in whiche spores wexen shulden sieken/ her bedes to nourisshe and forthe bring vnder surete a penst al ranerynous soules and berstes/ and not to be tyraunt them selfe. And than the smale in erthe and quyete/ by the herdes wel disposed/ owen for their soueraynes health and prospe/ rite to pray/ and in other doynges/ in maintenaunce therof performe/ without ony other administration in rule of any maner gouernaunce. And they wyl haue in hem/ and grace to come to suche thynges/ yet shulde they crase tyl their herdes them cleped/ although prosyte and pleasaunce shulde solowe. But trewly other gouernaunce ne other medlynge ought they not to clayme/ ne ȳ herdes on hem to put. Trewly amonges cosmoge dare I not come/ but if rychesse be my meane/ soothly she ȝ other bodely goodes maketh nigh cosmoge/ ther nawer propynquite ne alyaunce in tyme was/ ne shuld haue be/ nere it for her medlig manere/ wherfore sundly am I not ther leged. Poure of spyrred is behynde/ rychesse suffreth him to passe: truly he saith he com neuer of Japhetes childre. Wherof I am sory ȳ Japhetes childre for power/ I no lenger ben rebened/ ȝ Cayues childrey for riches be maked Japhetes heires. Alas this is a wonder chaunge bytwene ij

clyn

tine Loue chyldren/ fythen that of Japhetes offspring come ben daughters/ & of Lapy descen ded the lyne of seruage to hes brothers childer. Lo so we gentylesse and seruage as cosynes bothe descended out of two brethern of one body: Wherfore I saye in sothnesse/ that gentylesse in synne maken not gentyl synage in successyon/ without deserte of a mans owne sense. Where is nowe the syne of Alysaundre the noble/ or ells of Hector of Troye: Who is descended of right bloode of lyne fro kyng Artour: Parde sir Perceus/ whom that kynge Alysaundre maad to ben his herre in Grece/ was of no kynges bloode/ his dame was a lomyp fiere. Of what kynred ben the gentyles in our dayes: I trow therfore if any good be in gentylesse/ it is only that it semeth a maner of necessyte be input to gentylmen/ that they shulden not varyen fro the vertues of their auncestres. Certes al maner synage of men ben euery liche in byrth/ for one father maker of al goodnes enformed hem al/ & al mortal folke of one sede arne greyned. Wherto auaunt men of her synage/ in cosynage or in elde fathers. Lose now the grunyng/ and to god maker of mans person/ there is no clerke ne no worthy gentilesse: and he that norissheth his coraye with vyces & vnreasonable lustes/ and leaueth the vyrtuous course/ to whiche ende hym brought forthe his byrthe/ trewly he is vngentyl/ and amonge clerkes may ben nempned. And therfore he that wol ben gentyl/ he mote daunten his fleshe fro vyces & vnreasonable lustes/ and leaue also rigues of wicked lustes/ and drawe to hym vertue/ that in al places gentylnesse gentylmen maketh. And so speke I in femenyne gendre in general/ of the persones at the reuerence of one/ whom euery wight honoureth/ for her bountie and her noblesse ymake her to god so dere/ that hir moder she became/ and she me hath had so great in worshyp/ that I nyl for nothyng in open declare/ that in any thynge ayenst her secte maye so betyde: for al vertue and al worthynesse of pleasaunce in hem habounden. And although I wolde any thing speke/ trewly I can not/ I may synde in yuel of hem no maner matere.

Right with these wordes she synte of that lamentable melodye/ and I ganne with a sorcy herte to praye/ if that it were lykyng vnto her noble grace/ she wolde her deyne to declare me the matere that firste was begonne/ in whiche she ieste and synte to speke before she gan to synge.

O (quod she) this is no newe thynge to me/ to sene you menne desyren after mater/ whiche your selfe caused to Boyde.

Ah good lady (qd I) in whom victorie of strength is proued aboue al other thynge/ after the iugement of Esdram/ whose lordshyp al signeu: who is that right as emperour hem comaundeth/ whether thilke ben not women/ in whose lykeneesse to me ye apeten. For right as many saite the principalte of al thyng vnder his beynge/ in the masculyne gender/ and no mo genders ben there but masculyn and femenyne/ al the remenaunt ben no genders but of grace/ in facultie of grammer. Right so in the femenyne/ the women holden the vppereste degree of al thynges vnder thilke gendre conteyned. Who bungeth forthe synges/ whiche that ben lordes of se and of erthe/ and al peoples of women ben borne: they norysshe hem that graffen vynes/ they maken men comforte in their gladde cheres. Her forowe is bothe to mannes herte. Without women the beyng of men were impossyble. They conne with their swetnesse the ere wel herte rauysshe and make it mebe/ buxome/ and benigne/ without violence meuynge. In beaute of their eyen/ or ells of other maner feture is al mens desyres/ ye more than in golde/ precious stones/ eyther any rychesse. And in this degree lady your selfe many hertes of men haue so bounden/ that parfyte blysse in womanlynde to ben myn wenen/ and in nothynge ells. Also lady the goodnesse/ the vertue of women/ by properte of discretion/ is so wel knowen/ by syteluesse of maner/ that desyre to a good asker by no waye conne they warne: and ye thanne that wol not passe the lynde werchynge of your sectes by general discretion/ I wotte wel ye wol so enclyne to my prayere/ that grace of my requeste shal

fully

fully ben graunted. Certes (qꝺ ſhe) thus for the more parte farith al mankynde to praye/ and to crye after womans grace/ and fayne many fantaſies to make hertes enclyne to your deſyres: & whan theſe ſely women for ſtrokes of their kynde beleeue your wordes/ and wenen al be goſpel the promiſe of your beheſtes/ than graunt they to you their hertes/ and fulfylleth your luſtes/ wherthrough their lyberte in mayſtreſhyp that they to forne had is thralled/ & ſo maked ſouerayn and to be prayed/ þ firſt was ſeruaunt/ & voice of prayer vſed. Anon as ſpied is your luſt/ many of you be ſo trewe/ that lytel hede take ye of ſuche kyndneſſe/ but with trayſoun anon ye thynke hem begyle/ & let lyght of that thyng whiche firſte ye maked to you wonders dere/ ſo what thyng to women it is to loue any wight er ſhe hym wel knowe/ & haue hym ꝓued in many halfe/ for euery glyttryng thyng is nat golde/ & vnder colour of fayre ſpeche many vices may be hyd & conſeled. Therfore I rede no wyght to truſt on you to rathe/ mens chere & her ſpeche right gyleful is ful ofte/ Wherfore without good aſſay/ it is nat worthe on many on you to truſte: Trewly it is right kyndely to euery man that thynketh women betraye/ & ſhewen outwarde al goodneſſe/ tyl he haue his wyl ꝑformed. Lo the birde is begyled with the merry voice of the foulere whiſtel. Whan a woman is cloſed in your nette/ than wol ye cauſen kyndeny/ & beare vnkyndneſſe her vnhāde/ or falſete vpon her putte/ your owne malycious trayſon with ſuche thynge to excuſe. Lo than han women none other wreche in vēgeaunce/ but blober & wepe tyl hem lyſt ſtynt/ & foully her miſhap cōplayne/ & is put in to wenyng that al men ben ſo vntrewe. Howe often haue men chaunged her loues in a lytel while/ or elſe for ſayſyng their wyl in their place hem ſette: for frenſhip ſhal be one/ & fame with another hym lyſte for to haue/ & a thrde for deſyre/ or elſe were he loſt bothe in packe & in clothes: Is this faire/ nay god wot/ I may nat tel by thouſande partes/ the wrōges in tre chery of ſuche falſe people/ for make they neuer ſo good a bōde/ al ſette ye at a myte whan your hert tourneth: And they that wenen for ſoth we of you dey/ the pitt of your falſe herte is flowe out of towne. Alas therfor/ þ euer any woman wolde take any wyght in her grace/ tyl ſhe knowe at the ful on whom ſhe might at al aſſayes truſt. Wonne ton no more craft in queynt knowynge/ to vnderſtande the falſe deſeyuable conuertmentes of mannes begylynges. Lo howe it fareth/ though ye men grone and crye/ certes it is but diſeyt/ and that preueth wel by thendes in your wretchynge. Howe many women haue ben ſorne/ and with ſhame foule ſhent by longe laſtynge tyme/ whiche thorowe nonnes gyle haue ben deſeyued: euer their fame ſhal dure/ and their dedes radde and ſonge in many londes/ that they han done treuoutren ſhal they neuer/ but al way ben demed lightly/ in ſuche plyte a yen ſhulde they fal/ of whiche ſlaunders and tenes ye falſe men and wicked ben the very cauſes/ on you by right ought theſe ſhames and theſe reproues al holy diſcende. Thus arne ye al wyghe vntrewe/ for al your fayre ſpeche your herte is ful ſpokel. What cauſe han ye women to diſpyſe: better fruite than they ben/ ne ſwetter ſpyces to your behoue mowe ye not kynde/ as farre as worldly bodyes ſtretchen. Loke to their fourmynge at the makyng of their perſones by god in tope of paradyce/ for goodneſſe of mans proper body were they maked/ after the ſawes of the byble/ reherſyng goddes wordes in this wyſe: It is good to mankynde that we make to hym an helper. Lo in paradyſe for your helpe was this tree graffed/ out of whiche al lynage of man diſcendeth: if a man be noble frute/ of noble frute it is ſpronge: the bryſſe of paradyſe to menne ſory hertes/ yet in this tree abydeth. O noble helpes ben theſe trees/ and gentyl it wel to ben worſhypped of euery good creature: he that hem anoyeth bothe his owne ſhame/ it is a comfortable perle ayenſt al tenes. Euery company is myrthed by their preſent beyng. Trewly I wyſt neuer vertue/ but a woman were therof þ rote. What is hem the worſe though ſarazins on it lyen: Is your faythe vntrewe thoughe renuogates maken theron leaſynges. If the fyre doth any wight burnne/ blame his owne wytte that put hym

falſe

sette so farre in the feete. Is not yor gentyl-
lest and moste clement comfortable amonges
al other: yor as these werkes in soothesayinge
sothesaunce to mankynde: shal yor ben blas-
med for it seme a foole naturelly/by the o wy
fully wytte in sayinge. Ah wicked soules/
for your proper malyce/ and shrudnesse of
your selfe: ye blame and dispyse the puruoust
thyng of your kynde/ and whiche thynges a-
monges other moste ye despyse. Truly Nero
and his children ben shrewes/ that despyten so
their dames. The wickednesse and gylyng of
men/in disceiuabing of thilke that moste hath
ben gladed and pleased/ were impossyble to
wryte or to nempne. Neuer the latter yet I say
he that knoweth a way/ may it lightly passe:
the an herde ploured may safely to vnderstande
soures ben sayde: So I say/in ony that is pro-
uided is nothyng suche yuele to gesse. But these
thynges haue I rehersed to warne you wo-
men al at ones/ that to lyghtly without good
assaye ye assenten not to mannes speche. The
sonne in the day lyght/is to knowen from the
moone that shyneth in the nyght. Nowe to
the thy selfe (quod she) as I haue ofte sayd/I
knowe wel thyne herte/ thou arte none of al
the forsayd nempned people/ for I knowe wel
the contynuaunce of thy seruyce/ that neuer
sythen I set the a werke/ myght thy Wargas-
yte for pleasaunce/ frendeshyp/ne sayntede of
none other/ be in poynte moued from thyne
herte/ wherfore in to myne housholde hastely
I wol that thou entre/ and al the parfyte pu-
nyte of my werkyng make it be knowe in thy
vnderstondyng/ as one of my priuy sampla-
ces. Thou besyest (qd she) sayne to herte of
the thynges there I lefte. Ye forsothe (qd I)
that were to me a great blysse. Nowe (qd she)
forthou shalt not wene that womans rondp-
nesse for sayer sperke suche thyng belongeth.

Thou shalte (qd she) vnderstonde first
amonge al other thynges/ that al the
sute of my seruyce to me in the parfyte blysse
in heyng is despised in euery mannes herte/ be
he neuer so muche a wretche/ but euery man
trauayleth by dyuers studye/ and seke thilke
blysse by dyuers wayes/ but al the cubes are
knyt in sekenesse of despyte in the yfyte blysse/
that is suche ioye/ whan men it haue gotten/
there lyueth no thynge more to ben coueyted:
But sothe that despyte of suche perfection in
my seruyce be kyndely set in louers hertes/yet
her errouyous opinyons mistourne it by falste-
nesse of wenyng. And although mennes vn-
derstondyng be mistourned/ to knowe whiche
shuld ben the way vnto my person/ and why-
ther it abydeth: yet wote they there is a loue in
euery wight/ weneth by that thyng that he co-
ueyteth moste/ he shulde come to thilke loue/
and that is parfyte blysse of my seruauntes/
but thay fulle blysse maye not be/ and there
lacke any thynge of that blysse in any spde.
Be it sothe weth thay/ that he that must haue
ful blysse/ lacke no blysse in loue on no spde.

Therfore lady (quod I tho) thylke blysse I
haue despyed/ and sothe to sayne this my selfe
by wayes of riches/of dignite/ of power/ and
of renome/ wenyng me in tho thinges had ben
thilke blysse/ but ayenst the herte it turneth.
Whan I supposed beste thilke blysse haue get
and come to the ful purpose of your seruyce/
sodaynly was I hyndred/ and thrown so fer
abacke/ ꝑ me thynketh an impossyble to come
there I lefte. I wol wel (qd she) and ther-
fore hast thou fayled/ for thou wentest not by
the hye way: a lytel musgoyng in the gynnyng
causeth myckel errour in the ende/ wherfore of
thilke blysse thou fayledest for hauyng of ry-
chesse/ne non of the other thyng; thou nepne-
dest/ ne wen nat make suche pfyte blysse i soue
as I shal shewe. Therfore they be nat worthy
to thilke blysse/ ȝ yet somwhat must be cause
and way to thilke blysse: Ergo there is some
suche thing ȝ some way/ but it is lytel i vsage
and that is nat openly knowe. But what se-
lest in thyne hert of ꝑ seruice/ in whiche by me
thou art entred: Weneste aught thy selfe yet be
in the hye way to my blysse: I shal so shewe it
to the/ thou shalte nat con saye the contrary.

Good lady (qd I) altho I suppose it in my
herte/ yet wolde I here thyn wordes/ for we
meanen in this mater. (Qd she) that I shal
with my good wyl. Thilke blysse despyed/ for
deale ye knowen/ altho it be nat parfitly/ for
fyndly entention ledeth you therto/but in this
maner

maner lyuenges is al ſuche wayes ſhewed.
Euery wight in this world to haue this bliſſe
one of thilke thre wayes of lyues muſt ꝓcede/
whiche after oppinions of great clerkes arne
by names cleaped/beſtiallich/ reſonablich/ ia
vertuous: manlych is worldlich/ beſtialliche
is luſties & delytable/ nothynge reſtrayned by
bridel of reaſon/ al that ioyeth & peueth glad-
neſſe to the hert/and it be ayenſt reaſon/is ly-
kened to beſtial lyuyng/ whiche thynge folo-
weth luſties & delytes/ wherfore in ſuche thige
maye nat that ꝓuous bliſſe that is maiſter of
al vertues abyde. your fathers tofore you
haue cleped ſuch luſty lyuenges after ỹ fleſſh
paſſions of deſyre/ which are innominable to
fore god & mā both. Thā after determination
of ſuche wyſe/ we accorden that ſuche paſſiōs
of deſyre ſhul nat be nempned/but holden for
abſolute from al other lyuēges & prourynges/
and ſo lyueth in to lyuenges/ manlich & reſo-
nable to declare the maters begonne. But to
make the fully haue vnderſtādyng in mānlich
lyuenges/ whiche is holden worldlich in theſe
thynges/ſo that ignorance be made no letter.
I wol (qō ſhe) nēpne theſe forſayd wayes be
names & cōcluſions. Firſt riches/dignite/re-
nome/ & power/ ſhul in this worke be cleaped
bodily goodes/ for in hē hath ben a gret thro w
mānes truſt of ſelyneſſe in loue/ as in riches/
ſuffiſance to haue maintayned that was be-
gon/ by worldly catel in dignite/honour/ & re
uerence of hem that werne vnderput by mai-
ſtry therby to obey. In renome glore of peo-
ples prayſyng/after luſtes in their hert/ with-
out hede taſyng to qualite & maner of doing/
and in power/ by trouth of lordſhips mayute-
naunce/thyng to ꝓcede forth in doyng. In al
whiche thynges a longe tyme mānes couey-
tiſe in cōmune hath ben greatly grounded/ to
cōe to the bliſſe of my ſeruice/ but treuly they
were begyled/ & for the principal muſte nedes
fayle & in helping mowe nat auaile. Se why
for holdeſt hym not poore ỹ is nedy? Yes parde
(qō I) And him for diſhonored that moche
folke deyne nat to reuerēce. That is ſoth (qō
I) & what him ỹ his maiſter fayleth & mowe
nat helpen. Certes (qō I) me ſemeth of al mē
he ſhulde be holden a wrech. And weneſt nat
(qō ſhe) that he that is lyteł in renome/ but as
thet is out of the prayſynges of mo men than
a fewe be iuſt in ſhame? Yes ſoth (qō I) it is
ſhame & villany to hym that coueyteth renō
that more folk nat prayſe in name than perſe
Soth (qō ſhe) thou ſayſt ſoth/ but al theſe thi
ges are folowed of ſuche maner doyng/ and
wendeth in riches ſuffiſāce/ in power maiſt/
in dignyte worſhip/ & in renome glore/ wher-
fore they diſcēden in to deſceyuable wenyng/ &
in that ſeruice diſcrete is folowed. And thus in
general/ thou & al ſuche other that ſo worchen
fayleth of my bliſſe that ye long hay deſyred/
wherfore truly I ſyke of treaſon is the hye way
to this bliſſe/ as I thynke more openly to de-
clare hereafter. Neuer the later/ yet in a lyteł
to cōforte thy herte/in ſhewyng of what waye
thou arte entred thy ſelfe/ & that thy Margā-
rite may knowe the ſet in the hye way/ I wol
enfoume the in this wiſe. Thou haſt fayled of
thy firſt purpoſe/ bicauſe thou wenteſt wrōge
and leſteſt the hye waye on thy right ſyde/ as
thus/ thou lokedeſt on worldly lyuenge & that
thyng the begyled/ & lightly therfore as a lyteł
aſſay thou fongedeſt/ but whan I turned thy
purpoſe/ & ſhewed the a parte of the hye waye
tho thou abode therin/ and no dethe ne ſeed-
neſſe of non enemy myght ỹ out of thilk way
reue/ but euer one in thyne hert/ to come to the
ilke bliſſe whan thou were areſted and fyxte
tyme enpuſoned/thou were loth to chaūge thy
wey/ for in thy hert thou wendeſt to haue ben
there thou ſhuldeſt/ & for I had routhe to ſene
the myſcaried/ & wyſt wel thyne ableneſſe my
ſeruyce to fother & encreaſe/ I come my ſelfe
without other meany to viſyt thy perſon/ in cō
forte of thy hert: & pby in my cōmyng ỹ were
greatly gladed/ after whiche tyme/ no diſtraſe/
no care/ no tene/ miȝt moue me out of thy hert
And yet am I gladde & greatly enpaired/ ſo we
contynually thou haddeſt me in myride/ with
good auyſement of thy conſcience/ whan thy
eyng & his pointes by hege wordes & greal/ ſo
bed after Variaunce in thy ſperhe/ & euer thou
were redy for my ſake in plefaunce of ỹ Mar
garite perle/ and many mo other/ thy body to
obligge in to Marces doyng/ if any contrarie
thy ſawes/ ſtedfaſt way maketh ſtedfaſt hert/

wych

with good hope in the ende. Certayne I wot that thou it wel vnderstode: for I se the so set and not thauangynge herte haddest in impacyence: and I made thou haddest grace of thy synne: in forgeuenesse of myscl mysdedes to ꝑ gracious kyng arte thou myscl holden: of whose grace & goodnesse sometyme hereafter I thinke the enfourme: when I shew the grounde where as mortal vertue growth. Who brought the to wretche? Who brought this grace aboute? Who made thy herte hardy? Certayne it was I: for haddest thou of me fayled: than of this purpose had neuer taken in thes wyse. And therfore I say thou might wel trust to come to thy blysse: sythen thy grutynge hath ben harde: but euer grauously after thy herte desyre hath pitoused. Sythen synned with many heuen men vnto way for trewe: and safely may may trust to the alay in wertynge. This discrecion hath proued what waye haue forwarde thou thynkest to holde. Now we in good fayth fadyr (quod I tho) I am now we in: me semeth it is the hye way and the ryght. Ye forsothe (quod she) and now we I wol dispone thy first wayes: by whiche many men wenen to gette thilke blysse. But for as moche as euery herte that hath caught ful loue: is ted with queynt knyttynges: thou shalt vnderstande that loue and thilke forsayd blysse to forne declared in thes prouynges: shal hote the knot in the hert.

Wel (qd I) this impossession I wol wel vnderstande. Now we also (qd she) for the knotte in the herte muste ben from one to an other: and I know thy desyre: I wol thou vnderstande these maters to ben sayd of thy selfe in dispouynge of thy first scrupes: and in strengthynge of thilke that thou haste vndertake to thy Margarete perle. A goddes halfe (qd I) right wel I fele that al this case is possyble and trewe: and therfore I admytted al togyther. Vnderstanden wel (quod she) these termes: and lose no contradyction thou graunt.

If god wol (qd I) of al these thynges wol I not sayle: and if I graunt contradyction: I shulde graunte an impossyble: and that were a foule vnconuenyence: for whiche thynges ladye ywys hereafter I thinke me to kepe.

If (qd she) thou knowest that euery thynge is a cause wherethrough any thyng hath beyng: that is cleped caused: than if richesse causen knot in herte: thilke richesse arne cause of thilke precious thynge beyng: but after the sentence of Aristotle: euery cause is more in dignyte than his thynge caused: wherthrough it folowth richesse to ben more in dignyte tha thilke knot: but richesses arne kyndely naughty: badde: and nedy: and thilke knotte is thynge kyndely good: moste praysed and desyred: Ergo thynge naughty: badde: and nedy: in kyndely vnderstandynge is more worthy than thynge kyndely good: moste desyred and praysed: the consequence is false: nedes the antecedent mote ben of the same condycion. But that richesses ben bad: naughty: and nedy: that wol I proue: wherfore they mowe cause no surthe thyng: that is so glorious and good: The more richesse thou haste: the more nede haste thou of helpe hem to kepe. Ergo thou nedest in richesse: whiche nede thou shuldest not haue if thou hem wantest. Thay muste richesse ben nedy: that in their hauyng maken ꝑ nedy to helpen in surete thy richesse to kepen: wherthrough folowth richesse to ben nedy. Euery thing causynge pacte to badde & naughty: but richesse in one causen misease: in another they mowen not euenly stretchen al about. Wherof cometh plee: debate: theste: begynnges: but richesse to wynne: whiche thynges ben badde: and by richesse arne caused: Ergo thilke richesse ben badde: whiche badnesse and nede ben knyt in to richesse by a maner of kyndely propertie: and euery cause and caused accordeth: so that it folowth thilke richesse to haue the same accordaunce with badnesse and nede: that their cause asketh. Also euery thynge hath his beyng by his cause: than if ꝑ cause be distroyed: the beyng of caused is vanysshed: And so if richesse causen loue: and richesse weren distroyed: the loue shulde vanysshe: but thilke knotte and it be trewe may not vanysshe for no goyng of no richesse: Ergo richesses ne cause of the knot. And many men as I sayd: setten the cause of the knotte in richesse: thilke knytten the richesse: and nothynge the lesse:

thilke

thilke persone what euer they ben/ wemen that ryches is most worthy to be had/ & that make they the cause: & so wene they thilke ryches be better than the person. Comenly suche asken rather after the quantyte that after the qualyte/ and suche wemen as wel by hem selfe as by other/ that confumeth of his lyfe and of his soule is no more precious/ but in as myket as he hath of rychesse. Alas howe maye he holden suche thynges precious or noble/ that neyther han lyfe ne soule/ ne ordynaunce of werchynge lymmes: suche rychesse ben more worthy whan they ben in gatherynge/ in departing gyueth his loue of other mens prayssyng. And auarycr gatherynge maketh be hated and nedy to many out helpes: and whan seweth the possession of such goodes/ and they gynne vanysshe/ than entreth sorowe and trete in their hertes. O badde & sharpe ben thilke that at their departynge maketh men treteful and sory/ and in the gatherynge of hem make men nedy: Woche solde at ones mowen not togyder moche therof haue. A good gest glad deth his hoste and al his meyny/ but he is a badde gest that maketh his hoste nedy/ & to be aferde of his gestes goyng. Certes (qõ I) me wondreth therfore that the comune opinyon is thus: He is worthe no more than that he hath in catel. O (qõ she) sone thou be not of that opynion / for if golde or money/ or other maner of riches shynen in thy sight/ Whose is that: nat thyn: & tho they haue a lytel beautie/ they be nothyng in cõparison of our fynde/ & therfore ye shulde nat set your worthynesse in thyng lower than your selfe/ for the riches/ the fairnesse/ the worthynesse of thilke goodes/ if ther be any suche preciousnesse in hem are nat thyne/ thou madest hem so newer/ from other they come to the/ & to other they shul from the: Wherfore enbraceth thou other weghtes good as tho they were thyn? fynde hath dia we hem by hem selfe. It is sothe the goodes of the erth ben ordayned in your fode & norissynge/ but if thou wolte holde the apayde with that sufficeth to thy fynde/ thou shalt nat be in danger of no suche riches/ to fynde sufficeth lytel thig who that taketh hede. And if thou wolt algates with superfluite of riches be a throted/ thou shalt hastely be anoyed/ or elle yuel at ease. And fairnesse of fedes ne of habytacions/ ne multytude of meyne/ maye nat be reherced as riches that are thyn owne/ for if they be badde it is great sclaunder & villany to the ocupyer/ and if they be good or faire/ the maker of the workemanship that hem made is to prayse. Howe shulde other wyse beautie be cõpted for thyne/ thilke goodnesse & fairnesse be ayen to tho thinges hem selfe/ than if they be nat thyne sorowe nat what thay wende/ ne glad the nat in pride and pride what thou hem hast/ for their beautie and their beautes cometh out of their owne fynde/ & nat of thyne owne person: as fairr ben they in their nat hauyng as whan thou haste hem/ they be nat fairr for thou haste hem/ but thou haste geten hem for the fairnesse of their selfe. & there the balance of men is demed in richesse outforth/ wenen me to haue no proper good in them selfe/ but serche it in straunge thinges. Trewly the cõdycion of good wenyng is in ỹ misfourned/ to wene your noblesse be not in your selfe/ but in the goodes & beautie of other thynges. Pardy the beestes that ben but selyng soules/ haue sufficiaunce in their owne selfe: & ye that ben lyke to god/ seken encrease of sufficiaunce from so excellent a fynde of so lowe thynges/ ye do great wrong to him that you made lordes ouer al erthly thynges/ & ye put your worthynesse vnder the nõbre of the fete of lower thynges & soule / whan ye inge thilke riches to be your worthynesse/ than put ye your selfe by estimacion vnder thilke soule thynges/ & than seme ye the knowyng of your selfe/ so be ye viler than any dombe beest/ that cometh of shrewde vice. Right so thilke persons that sowen non yuel for dere worthynesse of the persone/ but for straunge goodes/ & saith the adornement in the knot lyth in such thing/ his errour is perilous & shrende/ and he wrieth moche benym with moche welth/ & that knot maye nat be good whan he hath it getten.

Certes thus hath riches with sparcring lyght anoyed many: & often whan there is a thefe out shrewe/ he coueyteth al the golde/ al the precious stones that mowen be founden to haue in his bandon/ he weneth no wight be worthy to haue suche thynges but he alone. Howe ma

ny hafe

nye saste thou knowe no we in late yeue/ that in that eyghesse supposed sussysance haue so wed/ & no we it is al sayled. Ye lady (qd I) that is for mysse medlyng and otherwyse gouerned shulde eyghesse than they shulde. Ye (qd she tho) had not the floode greatly accresed/ and thou we to hem warde both grauel and sande/ he had made no medlynge. And right as sey weuth floode/ so dra weth sey ebbe/ and pulleth ayen vnder wawe al the sylte out thou w/ but if good pyles of noble gouernaunce in loue/ in wel meanynge maner/ ben sadly grounded/ to whiche holde thilke grauel as for a whyle/ that ayen lightly mowe not it turne: and if the pyles ben trewe/ the grauel and sande wol abyde. And certes ful warenyng my loue shalte thou neuer thorowe hem get ne couer/ that lightly with an ebbe er thou werre it wol ayen meue. In eyghesse many men haue had teres and diseases/ whiche they shulde not haue had/ if therof they had sayled. Thou we whiche nowe declared partely it is shewed/ that for eyghesse shulde the knotte in herte neyther ben caused in one ne in other: trewly knotte maye ben knytte/ and I trowe more stedfast in loue though eyghesse sayled/ and elu in eyghesse is the knotte & not in herte. And thanne suche a knotte is falle/ whanne she seeth and withdraweth the grauel/ that such eyghesse sopeth/ thilke knotte wol vnknytte. Wherfore no trusti/ no way/ no cause/ no parsyte beyng is in eyghesse of no suche knotte/ therfore another way muste we haue.

DHonour in dignyte is wened to yeuen a ful knot. Ye certes (qd I) and of that opinyon ben many/ for they sayne dignyte/ with honour/ and reuerence/ causeth hertes to entheyne/ and so abled to be knytte togyther/ for ꝑ excellence in somerayute of such degrees.

Loue (qd she) of dignyte/ honour/ and reuerence causeth thilke knotte in herte/ this knot is good and profytable. For euery cause of a cause/ is cause of thyng caused: Thanne thus/ good thynges and profytable ben by dignyte/ honour/ and reuerence caused. Ergo they acordeth/ and dignyties ben good with reuerence and honour/ but contrarye no wey not acordeth: Wherfore by reason there shulde no dignyte/ no reuerence/ none honour acorde with shrewes/ but that is falle: they haue ben cause to shrewes in many sheudnes/ for with hem they acroiden. Ergo from begynnyng to argue ayenwarde tyl it come to the laste conclusyon/ they are not cause of the knot. Lo al day at eye/ arne shrewes not in reuerence/ in honour/ and in dignyte: yes forsothe/ rather than the good. Thanne seo weth it that shrewes rather than good shul ben cause of this knot. But of this contrarie of al louers is vpleued/ and for a sothe openly determyned to holde.

Nowe (quod I) fayne wolde I here/ howe suche dignytees acroiden with shrewes.

D (qd she) that wol I shewe in manyfolde wise. Ye wene (qd she) that dignytes of offyce here in youre ryches as the sonne/ it shyneth bright withouten any cloude: whiche thynge whan they comen in the handes of malycious tyraunnes/ there cometh moche harme/ & more grenaūce therof/ than of ꝑ wylde fyre/ though it bienne al a streete. Certes in dignyte of offyce/ the werkes of the occupyer shewen the malyce and the badnesse in the person/ with shrewes they maken manyfolde harme/ and moche people shamen. Howe often hau ye rancours for malyce of the gouernour shulde ben maintenyned? Hath not than suche dignytees caused debate/ rumours/ and yuele? yes god wote/ by suche thynges haue ben trusted to make mens vnderstandyng entyre to many queynte thynges. Thou wotteste wel what I meane. Ye (qd I) therfore as dignyte/ suche thynge in tene ywrought/ so ayenwarde the substaunce in dignite changed/ resyped to bring ayen good plyte in doyng. Do way/ do way (qd she) if it so betyde/ but that is selde/ that suche dignyte is betake in a good mannes gouernaunce. What thynge is to trusten in the dignytees goodnesse: parde the bountie and goodnesse is hers/ that vsen it in good gouernaunce/ and therfore cometh it that honoure and reuerence shulde ben done to dignyte/ bycause of entresynge vertue in the occupyer/ and not to the ruler/ bycause of sourayntie in dignite. Sythen dignite may no vertue cause/ ꝑfo it wouly worshyp for suche goodnesse

not

not dignyte/ but person ꝑ maketh goodnesse in dignyte to shyne. This is wonder thyng (qꝺ I) for me thynketh/ as the person in dignite is worthy honour for goodnesse/ so tho a person for badnesse magre hath deserued/ yet the dignite seneth to be cõmended. Let be (qꝺ she) thou erreste right foule/ dignite with badnesse is helper to pfourme the felonous doyngs: pardy were it ꝑfytly good or any properte of ꝑfytly vertue hadden in hem selfe/ shrewes shulde hem neuer haue/ with hem shulde they neuer accorde. water & fire that ben contrarious mowen nat togider ben assembled/ ꝑfyte wol nat suffre such cõtraries to ioyn. & sithen at eye ꝰ experiẽce in doyng/ we fene that shrewes haue hem more often than good menne/ ꝑfyter mayste thou be/ that ꝑfytly good in suche thyng/ is nat appropried. Pardy were they ꝑfytly good/ as wel one as other shulden euẽ lych in vertue of gouernaũce ben worthe: but one fayleth in goodnesse another dothe the cõtrary/ & so it shewth ꝑfytly goodnesse in dignyte nat be grouñded. And this same reason (qꝺ she) may be made in general on al the bodily goodes/ for they comen ofte to thriue out shrewes. After this he is strong that hath myzt to haue great burthyns/ & he is lyght & swifte that hath souraunte in rõnyng to passe other right so he is a shrewe on whom shrende thynges & badde han most werchynge. & right as philosophy maketh philosophers/ & my seruice maketh louers: Right so if dignytes weren good or vertuous/ they shulde maken shrewes good/ & turne her malyce & make hem be vertuous/ but that do they nat/ as it is pued/ but causen rãcour & debate. ergo they be nat good but vtterly badde. Had Nero neuer ben Emperour/ shulde neuer his dame haue be slayn/ to maken open the prupyte of his engendure. Herodes for his dignyte slewe many children. The dignite of kyng John wolde haue distroyed al Englãde. Therfore moste wysedom & goodnesse both/ nedeth in a person/ the malice in dignite sfyly to hudel/ & with a good hytte of arest to withdrawe/ in case it wolde practice otherwise than it shulde: trewly ye yeue to dignites wõgful names/ your clepyng. They shulde hete nat dignite/ but mouyng of badnesse & mayntenour of shrewes. Pardy shyne the sonne neuer so bright/ & it dung fouthe no heate/ ne sesonably the herbes out bringe of ꝑ erthe/ but suffre seostes & colde/ & the erthe barayne to lygge by tyme of his compas in cyrcute about/ ye wolde wonder & dispreyse that son. If the Moone be at ful & she weth no lyzt but derke & dymme to your syght apperth/ & make distruction of ꝑ waters/ wol ye nat suppose it be vnder cloude or in eclipse: & that some prcuy thing vnknowen to your wittes/ is cause of suche cõtrarious doynge. Than if clerkes that han ful insyght & knowyng of suche impediments enfourme you of the sothe/ Ye yidiottes ye ben/ but if ye yeuen credẽce to thilk clerkes word/ & yet it doth me tene/ to sene many wretches treopen in such maner planettes Trewly lytel con they on philosophy or els on my lore/ ꝑ any desyre haueth suche lyghtynge planettes in that wyse any more to shyne. Good lady (qꝺ I) tel ye me howe ye vsen in these thynges. Lo (qꝺ she) the dignites of poepte/ Sonne & Moone/ nothyng in ꝑfyde shewn their shynyng as they shulde. For the Sonne made no brennyng hete in lowe/ but freseth enuye in mennes hertes for feblenesse of shynyng hete: & the Moone was about vnder an olde cloude/ the lyuenges by waters to distroyt.

Lady (qꝺ I) it is supposed they had shyned as they shulde. ye (qꝺ she) but now it is proued at the ful their beaute in ꝑfytly shynyng fayled/ wherfore dignyte of hym selfen hath no beautie in fairnesse/ ne dryueth nat away vices but encreaseth/ & so be they no cause of the knotte. Nowe se ye good trouth/ holde ye nat such sonnes worthy of no reuerence & dignites/ worthy of no worshyp/ ꝑ maketh men to do the more harmes: I not (qꝺ I) Lo (qꝺ she) & thou se a wyse good man/ for his goodnesse & wysenesse wolte thou nat do him worshyp & therof he is worthy. That is good skil (qꝺ I) it is dewe to such/ bothe reuerẽce and worshyp to haue. Than (qꝺ she) a shrewe for his shrewdnesse/ altho he be put forth to some other for ferde/ yet is he worthy for shrewdnesse to be vnworshypped: of reuerence no pis is he worthy to haue/ to cõtrarious doyng he longeth & that is good ꝑfytly. for right as he despiseth

despiseth

fmyteth the dignites/ thilke same thyng ayen-
warde hym smyteth/ or ells shulde smyte. And
ouer this thou woste wel (quod she) that fyre
in euery place heteth where it be/ and water
maketh wete: Wisy: for lyndely werkyng is
so yput in hem to do suche thynges: for euery
lyndely in werkyng sheweth his kynde. But
though a wight had ben mayst of your cytie
many wynter togyder/ and come in a straunge
place there he were not knowen/ he shulde for
his dignyte haue no reuerence. Than neyther
worshyppe ne reuerence is lyndely propre in
no dignite/ sythen they shulden ben their kyn-
de/ in suche doynge as any were. And if reue-
rence ne worshyppe lyndely be not set in dig-
nytees/ and they more therin ben shewed than
goodnesse/ for that in dignyte is shewed but
it proueth that goodnesse lyndely in hem is
not grounded. Iwys neyther worshyppe ne
reuerence ne goodnesse in dignyte/ done none
offyce of kynde/ for they haue none suche pro-
pertie in nature of doynge/ but by false opi-
nyon of the people. Lo howe sometyme thilke
that in your cytie werne in dignyte noble/ if
thou lyste hem nempne/ they ben nowe ouer-
turned/ bothe in worshyp/ in name/ and in re-
uerence: wherfore such dignites haue no kynd-
ly werkyng of worshyppe and of reuerence/
he that hath no worthynesse on it selfe. nowe
it tryeth and nowe it vanissheth after the va-
ryaunt opynyon in false hertes of vnstable
people. Wherfore if thou despyse the knotte of
this werk/ or ells if thou wolderst suppose she
shulde sette the knotte on the for suche maner
dignyte/ than thou weneste beautie or good-
nesse of thilke somwhat encreaseth the good-
nesse or vertue in the body: But dignyte of
hem selfe ben not good/ ne penery reuerence ne
worshyppe by their owne kynde/ howe shulde
they than perue to any other a thynge/ that by
no ways nowe they haue hem selfe: It is seue
in dignyte of the emperour and of many mo
other/ that they nowe not of hem selue kepe
their worshyppe ne their reuerence/ that that
in a lytel whyle it is nowe vp so nowe do wane/
by vnstedfaste hertes of the people. What
foolitie nowe they perse that with cloude light-
ly leaueth his kynynge: Certes to the ocu-
pier is moste appeyred/ sythen suche doynge
bothe vilanye to hym that maye it not mayn-
tayne/ wherfore thilke waye to the knotte is
crosted: and if any despyse to come to the knot/
he muste leaue this waye on his lefte
syde/ or ells shal he neuer
come there.

Dayleth aught (quod she) power of
might in mayntenaunce of worthy
to come to this knot. Parde (quod
I) yel for hertes ben vanysshed from suche
maner thynges. Certes (quod she) though a
foolen herte is with thyng vanysshed/ yet ther-
fore is no generall cause of ỹ powers/ ne of a
syker parfyte herte tq be loked after. Was not
Nero the moste shrewe one of thilke that mey
rede/ and yet had he power to make senatours
iustyces/ and princes of many landes? Was
not that great power? Yes certes (quod I)
Wel (qd she) yet might he not helpe hym selfe
out of diseaise/ whan he gan fal. Howe many
ensamples canste thou remembre of kynges
great and noble/ and huge power holden/ and
yet they might not kepe hem selue from wret-
chednesse. Howe wretched was kyng Henry
Lurtmantyl er he deyde: he had not so moche
as to couer with his membres: and yet was
he one of the greateste kynges of al the Nor-
mandes offspring/ and moste possessyon had.
O/ a noble thynge and clere is power/ that is
not founden myghty to kepe hym selfe. Nowe
treuly a great fole is he/ that for suche thyng
wolde sette the knotte in thyne herte. Also po-
wer of realmes is not thilke greateste power
amonges the worldly powers reckened? And
if suche powers han wretchednesse in hem
selfe/ it folowith other powers of febler con-
dycion to ben wretched/ and than that wret-
chednesse shulde be cause of suche a knotte.
But euery wyght that hath reason wote wel
that wretchednesse by no way may ben cause
of none suche knotte/ wherfore suche power
is no cause. That powers haue wretched-
nesse in hem selfe/ may right lyghtly ben pro-
ued. If power lacke on any syde/ on that

ſyde is no power/ but no power is wretchydneſſe: for al be it ſo the power of emperours or kynges/ or elſe of their realmes (whiche is the power of the prince) ſtretchen wyde and brode/ yet beſydes is there moche folke of whiche he hath no cõmaundement ne lordſhyppe/ and there as lacketh his power/ his nonpower entreth/ where vnder ſprungeth that maketh hem wretches. No power is wretchydneſſe/ and nothing elſe: but in this maner hath kynges more portion of wretchydneſſe than of power. Trewly ſuche powers ben vnmyghty/ for euer they ben in drede howe thilke power frõ leſyng may be reped of forow/ ſo drede ſorily pricketh euer i their hertes: lytel is ỹ power whiche careth and ferdeth it ſelfe to mayntayne. Vnmyghty is that wretchydneſſe whiche is entred by the ferdful wenynge of the wretche hym ſelfe: and not pmaked by wretchydneſſe is betwene wretches/ and wretches al thyng bewayled: wherfore the not ſhulde be bewayled/ and there is no ſuche parfyte bliſſe that we ſuppoſed at ỹ gynnyng. Ergo power in nothyng ſhulde cauſe ſuche not tes. Wretchydneſſe is a fyndely propertie in ſuche power/ as by way of drede/ whiche they mowe not eſchewe ne by no way lyue in ſykernesſe. For thou woſte wel (quod ſhe) he is nought mighty that wolde done that he may not done ne perfourme. Therfore (quod I) theſe kynges and lordes that han ſuffyſaunce at the ful of men and other thynges/ mowen wel ben holden mighty: their comaundementes ben doue/ it is neuermore denyed. Foole (qõ ſhe) or he wotte hym ſelfe mighty or wotte it not: for he is nought mighty/ that is blynde of his might and wote it not. That is ſothe (qõ I) Than if he wot it/ he muſt nedes ben a dradde to leſen it. He that wotte of his might is in doute that he mote nedes leſe/ and ſo leadeth him drede to ben vnmyghty. And if he recche not to leſe/ lytel is that worthe that of the leſyng reaſon recheth nothyng: and if it were myghty in power or in ſtrength/ ỹ leſyng ſhulde ben withſet/ and whan it cometh to the leſyng he may it not withſette. Ergo thilke might is leude and naughty. Such mightes arne alſo to poſtes and pylleres that vpright ſtonden/ and great might han to beare many charges/ and if they croke on any ſyde/ lytel thynge maketh hem ouerthrowe. This is a good enſample (quod I) to pylleres and poſtes that I haue ſene ouerthrowed my ſelfe/ and hadden they ben vnderput with any helpes/ they had not ſo ſlyghly fal. Than holdeſt thou hym mighty that hath many men armed and many ſeruauntes/ and euer he is adradde of hem in his herte/ and for he gaſteth hem/ ſometyme he mote the more feare haue. Comenly he that other agaſteth/ other in hym ayenwarde werchen the ſame: and thus warniſſhed mote he be/ and of warnyſſhe the hour drede: Lytel is that might ỹ right leude/ who ſo taketh hede. Than ſemeth it (quod I) that ſuche famulers aboute kynges and great lordes/ ſhulde great might haue. Although a ſyphet in augrym haue no might in ſignifycacion of it ſelue/ yet he geueth power in ſignifycacion to other/ and theſe clepe I the helpes to a poſte to kepe hym from fallyng. Certes (quod ſhe) thilke ſykles ben leude. Why: but if the ſhorers ben wel grounded/ the helpes ſhullen ſlyden and ſuffre the charge to fal/ her myght lytel availeth. And ſo me thynketh (quod I) that a poſte alone ſtonding vpright vpon a baſſe/ may lenger in graet burthen endure/ than croked pylleres for al their helpes/ and her grounde be not ſyker. That is ſoth (qõ ſhe) for as the blynde in bearyng of the lame gyue ſtomble/ bothe ſhulde fal/ right ſo ſuche pylleres ſo enuyroned with helpes in fallyng of the grounde/ fayleth al togyther/ howe oft than ſuche famulers in their moſte pride of proſperyte ben ſodainly ouerthrowen. Thou haſte not howe many in a momẽt ſo ſterte ouerthrowe/ that couer might they neuer/ Whan the heyneſſe of ſuche fayling cometh by caſe of fortune/ they mowe it not eſchue: and might and power/ if ther were any/ ſhulde of ſtrẽgth ſuch thinges voyde and weyue/ ỹ ſo it is not. Lo than whiche thing is this power/ ỹ tho men han it they ben agaſt/ ỹ in no tyme of ful hanig be they ſyker: ỹ if they wold weyue drede/ as they mowe not/ lytel is in worthynes. Ỹ ye therfore on ſo naughty thing any not to cauſe. Lo I aduerſite/ thilke ben his foes ỹ gloſed ỹ ſemed frendes I wene: thus ary

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he sampleth his face and his trumpet and nothyng so verye ne more mighty for to anoy thy as a sampler trumpet and these thynges may they not werne: so trewly that myght is not worthe a rosse. And ouer al thynges he that maye not withdrawe the bridel of his fleshly lustes and his wretched complaynetes (no we thynke on thy selfe) trewly he is not mighty: I can fynde no waye that lythe to the shotte. Thilke people than that sitten their herten vpon suche mightes and powers often bey begyled. Parde he is not mighty that may do any thyng/ that another maye doone hym the selue/ and that may haue as great power ouer hym as he ouer other. A mighty that bermeth men/ aperiwarde hath bey often demed. Daserus slewe his gestes/ and he was slayne of Hercules his geste. Hugest betrayshed me my men/ and of Lollo was he betraped. He that with swerde smyteth/ with swerde shal be smytten. Than gan I to studyen a whyle on these thenges/ and made a countenaunce with my hande vp maner to bey shyelde. Nowe sir sone (qõ she) me thynketh somwhat there is within thy soule/ that troubleth thy vnderstandyng/ saye on what it is. (Quod I tho) me thynketh that although a man by power haue suche might ouer me/ as I haue ouer other/ that disposeth no myght vp my person/ but yet may I haue power and myght neuer the later. Be nowe (quod she) thyne owne leudenesse: he is mighty that maye without wretchydnesse/ and he is vnmyghty that may it not withstonde: but than he that might ouer the/ and he wol put on the wretchydnesse/ thou myght it not withstonde. Ergo thou sest thy selfe what folowith. But nowe (quod she) wolderst thou not shonne and thou se a slye han power to done harme to an other slye/ shalte haue no myght ne aperturynge thy selfe to defende. Yes certes (quod I) Who is a straper thyng (quod she) than the fleshly body of a man/ ouer whiche haue ostentyme slyes/ and yet lasse thyng than a slye/ mosel myght in grenaunce and anoyeng withouten any withstondynge/ for al thilke maniere mightes. And sythen thou sest thyne fleshly body in shadely power stande/ howe shulde they the accydent of a thynge bey in more surete of bey nge than substaunce? Wherfore thilke thynges that we clepe power/ is but accident to the fleshly body/ and so they may not haue that surete in myght whiche wanteth in the substaunciall body. Why there is no waye to the shotte/ that loketh aright after the ryght waye as he shulde.

Certy it is proued that richesse/ dignyte/ and power/ bey not trewe weye to the shotte/ but as rathe by suche thynges the shotte to be vnbounde: Wherfore on these thynges I rede no wight truste/ to gette any good shotte. But what shul we saye of renoume in the peoples mouthes/ shulde that bey any cause: what supposest thou in thyn herte?

Certes (quod I) yes I trowe/ for pour sixe persons I dare not safely it saye. Than (quod she) wol I preue that shrewes as rathe shul bey in the shotte as the good/ and that were ayenst synde. Sayne (quod I) wolde I that here/ me thinketh wonder howe renoume shulde as wel shytte a shrewe as a good person: renoume in every degre hath auaunced/ yet wyst I neuer the contrarye: shulde than renoume accorde with a shrewe: it maye not synke in my stomake tyl I here more. Nowe (quod she) haue I not sayd alwayes/ þ shrewes shul not haue the shotte. What nedeth (quod I) to reherse that any more/ I wotte wel euery wight by shydely reason/ shrewes in shytting wol refuse we. Than (qõ she) the good ought thilke shotte to haue. Howe ela (quod I) It were great harme (quod she) that the good were weyued and put out of espoire of the shotte/ if he it despied. O (qõ I) alas/ on suche thing to thinke I wene that heuen weepeth to se such wronges here bey suffred on erthe: the good ought it to haue and no wight ela. The goodnesse (qõ she) of a person may not bey knowe outforth/ but by renoume of þ shrewes/ wherfore he must be renemed of goodnesse to come to þ shot. So must it be (qõ I) or ela al lost that we carpen. Sothly (qõ she) þ were great harme/ but if a good man myght haue soo bey spies in scrupe of thilke shot/ a shrewe to be beyond/ they bey not shrewes in general but

by lackyng and prayſyng and by renome/ and ſo by the conſequence it folowth/ a thyng to ben prayſed and ſuyt/ is good to be forſake and vnſuyt. Ah (qõ I tho) haue ye lady ben here abouten/ yet wolde I ſe by grace of our argumentes better declared/ how we good & bad do acorden by lacking and prayſyng/ me thynketh it apenſt ſynde. Nay (qõ ſhe) and that ſhalt thou ſe as perne: theſe elementes han cõtrarous qualytes in ſynde/ by whiche they mowe not acorde no more than good & badde: and in qualytees they acorde/ ſo that cõtraries by qualyte/ acorden vp qualyte. Ye not erthe dyre/ and water ꝑ is nexte and betwene therthe is wete dyre and wete ben contrarie & mowen not acorde/ and yet this diſcordaunce is bõde to acorde by cloudes/ for bothe elementes ben colde. Right ſo the eyre that is nexte the water is wete/ & eke it is hotte. This eyre by his hete contrarieth water that is colde/ but thilke cõtrariouſly is oned my moyſture/ for bothe be they moyſt. Alſo the fyre that is nexte the erth/ and it encloſeth al about/ is dure: wherthrough it contrarieth erthe ꝑ is wete: and in hete they acorde/ for bothe they ben hote. Thus by theſe acordaunces/ diſcordantes ben ioyned and in a maner of acordaunce they acorden by conuertion/ that is knyttyng togyther: of that acorde cometh a maner of melodye that is right noble. Right ſo good and bad arne contrarie in doynges/ by lacking and prayſyng: good is bothe lacked and prayſed of ſome/ and badde is bothe lacked and prayſed of ſome: wherfore their contrarioufie acorde bothe by lackyng and prayſing. Than ſolowth it/ though good be neuer ſo moche prayſed/ a weth more to ben vnyt than the badde: or els bad for the renome that he hath/ muſt be taken as wel as ꝑ good/ and that o weth not. No forſothe (quod I) Wel (qõ ſhe) than is renome no wape to the vnot: Lo foole (qõ ſhe) how we clerkes watery of ſuche glaze of renome. O glouе/ glouе/ thou arte none other thynge to thouſandes of folke/ but a great ſweller of eres. Many one hath had ful great renome by falſe opinyon of barpaunt people: And what is fouler than folke wrongfully to ben prayſed/ or by maiſtre of ꝑ people gyltleſſe lacked: vches ſhame

ſolowth therof to hem that lacken wrong prayſeth/ and alſo to the deſertes prayſed/ and by lanye and repoſe of hym that deſlaundreth.

Good Mayſtre (quod ſhe) what acteth ſuche renome to the conſcience of a wyſe man/ that loketh and meaſureth his goodneſſe/ not by ſlaueleſſe wordes of ꝑ people/ but by ſothfaſtneſſe of conſcience: by god nothyng. And yf it be ſayde a mans name be erked by moche folkes prayſyng/ and foulen thyng that no folke not prayſen. I ſayde to the a ſpeel here before/ that no folke my ſtraunge rountrepes nought prayſen/ ſuche renome may not comen to their eres/ by reaſon of vnknowyng/ and other obſtacles/ as I ſayde: wherfore more folke not prayſen/ and that is right foule to him that renome deſpyeth/ to wete leſſe folke prayſen than renome enhaunce. I trowe the thanke of a people is nought worthe in remembraunce to take/ ne it procedeth of no wyſe iugement/ neuer is it ſtedfaſt perdurable: It is beyne and fleyng/ with wynde wayſteth and entreaſeth. Trewly ſuche glowe ought to be hated. If gentylleſſe be a clere thynge/ renome and glorie to enhaunce/ as in reckenyng of thy lynage/ than is gentylleſſe of thy ſyrie/ for why it ſeemeth that gentylleſſe of thy ſyrne/ is but prayſynge and renome that come of thyne aunceſtres deſertes: and if ſo be that prayſyng and renome of their deſertes make their clere gentyleſſe/ than mote they nedes ben gentyl for their gentyl dedes/ and not thou: for of thy ſelfe cometh not ſuch maner gentyleſſe/ prayſynge of thy deſertes. Than gentyleſſe of thyne aunceſtres that foraynе is to the/ maketh the not gentyl/ but vngentyl and repoſued/ and if thou contynueſt not their gentyleſſe. And therfore a wyſe man ones ſayde: Better is it thy ſynne to ben by the gentyleſſe/ than thou to glouſye of thy ſynnes gentyleſſe/ and haſte no deſerte therof thy ſelfe.

Howe paſſynge is the beaute of fleſſhly bodyes: more flyttynge than mowable flowres of ſomer. And if thyne eyen werry as good as the Lynx/ that maye ſene thorowe many ſtone walles/ bothe ſayre and foule in their entrayles/ of no maner ſtone ſhulde apere to thy ſyght/ that were a ſoule ſyght. Than is

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sayntesse by sekenesse of eyen/but of no synde/ wherfore thi/be shulde be no way to the knot: Whan thilke is went the knotte wendeth after. Lo nowe at al proues/none of al these thynges may we parfytly ben in vnderstandyng/ to ben waye to the duryng blysse of the knotte. But nowe to conclusyon of these maters/herkeneth these wordes. Very sonet is knowe from the wynter: in shorter tours drawith the dayes of Decembre/than in the moneth of Iune: The spunges of Maye faden and forlowen in Octobre. These thinges ben not vnbounden from their olde synde/they haue not forlet her werke of their propre estate. Ben of Voluntarious wyl/ withsytte that heuens gouerneth. Other thynges suffren thynges patiently to werche: Whan in what estate he be/ yet wolde he ben chaunged. Thus by queynt thynges blysse is despred/ and the frute that cometh of these spunges/nys but anguys and bytter/al though it be a whyle swete/ it maye not be with holde/ hastely they departe: thus al daye fayleth thynges that fooles wende. Right thus haste thou fayled in thy first wenyng. He that thynketh to sayle/ and drawe after the course of the sterre/de polo antartico/ shal he neuer come northwarde to the contrarye sterre of polus articus: of whiche thynges if thou take kepe/ thy first out waye goynge/ prison and exile may be cleped. The grounde falsed vnderneth/and so hast thou fayled. No wyght I wene blameth him that stynteth in mysgoyng/and secheth redy way of his blysse.

Nowe me thynketh (quod she) that it suffiseth in my shewyng the wayes/ by digiute/rychesse/ renome/ and power/ if thou lose clerely ary no ways to the knotte.

Very ar gunnet lady (quod I tho) that ye han maked in these fore nempned maters / me thynketh hem in my ful wytte conceyued/ shal I no more if god wyl in the contrarye be liegyed: But sayne wolde I and it were your wyl/ blysse of the knotte to me were declared/I might sele the better howe my herte myght assente to pursue the ende in seruyce/as he hath begonne. O (quod she) there is a melodye in heuen/ whiche clerkes clepen armony/ but that is not in bresynge of voyce/but it is a maner swete thing of syndesly werchyng/that causeth ioye out of nombre/ to recken/ and that is ioyned by reason and by wysdome/in a quantyte of proporcion of knytyng. God made al thyng in reason and in wytte of proporcion of melody/ we mowe not suffyse to shewe. It is wutten by great clerkes and wise/that in erthly thynges lightly by studye and by trauayle/ the knowynge may be geten: but of suche heuenly melody/ moste trauayle wol bringe out in knowyng right lytel. Swetenesse of this paradyse hath you rauisshed/it semeth ye slepten/refsed from al other diseases/ so syndely is your hertes therin ygrounded. Blysse of two hertes in ful loue knytte/ may not aright ben ymagyned: euer is their cõtemplacion ful of thought ye studye to plesaunce/ mater in bungynge/ comforte euerychc to other. And therfore of erthly thinges/ moste mater lightly cometh in your lerning. Knowlecdge of vnderstondig that is nyghe after eye/ but not so nyghe the coueityse of knyttynge in your hertes: Wose souereine desyreth euery wight in lytel herynge of heuenly commynge/ than of moste materyal purposes in erthe. Right so it is in propertie of my seruauntes/ that they ben more affyched in sterynge of lytel thynge in his despyt/ than of moste other mater/ lasse in his conscience. This blysse is a maner of sowne delycious/in a queynte voyce touched/ and no dynne of notes: there is none impression of breakynge labourc. I canne it not otherwyse nempne/ for wantynge of ynuy wordes/but paradyse terrestre ful of delycious melody/ withouten trauayle in sowne/ perpetual seruyce in ful ioye conuyted to endure. Onely synde maketh hertes in vnderstondig so to slepe/ that otherwyse may it nat be nempned/ ne I other maner names for lykynge swetnesse can I nat it declare/ al sugre & hony/ al mynstralsy & melody ben but foote and galle in cõparison by no maner proporcion to reken/

in respecte of this blyssful ioye. This armony this melody/this ꝑdurable ioye may nat be in doynge / but betwene heuens & elementes/ or twey ꝑfytly hertes/ ful knyt in trouth of naturel vnderstōdyng/ without wenynge and disceit/ as heuens & planettes/ whiche thynges cōtynually for ꝑfytly accordaūces/ forfeteth al contrarious meuynges/ that in to passyue diseases may sowne/ euermore it thryfteth after more werkyng. These thynges in proporcion be so wel ioyned/ that it vndoth al thyng/ whiche in to badnesse by any way may be acōpted. Certes (qd I) this is a thyng ꝓcious and noble. Alas that falsnesse euer or wantrust shulde euer be mayntayned/ this ioye to Boyde. Alas that euer any wretch shulde thorowe wrath or enuy/ iangelynge dare make to shoue this melody so farre a backe/ that openly dare it nat ben vsed: trewly wretches ben ful fylled with enuy & wrathe/ and no wight els. Flebynge & tales in such wretches dare appere openly in euery wightes eare/ with ful mouth so charged/ moste malyce moued many innocētes to shende/ god wolde their soule therwith were strāgled. Lo/ trouth in this blysse is hyd and oueral vnder couert hiw hydeth: he dare nat come a place for waytynge of shrewes. Cōmenly badnesse/ goodnesse amaistreth/ wt my selfe & my soule this ioye wolde I bye/ if the goodnesse were as moche as the noblay in melody. O (qd she) what goodnesse may be acōpted more i this material worlde/ truly non that shalt thou vnderstōde. Is nat euery thig good that is cōtrariant and distroyeng yuel? How we els (qd I) Enuy/ wrathe/ & falsnesse ben general (qd she) & that wot euery man beyng in his ryght mynde/ the knotte the whiche we haue in this blysse/ is contrarpaunt and distropeth such maner yuels. Ergo it is good. What hath caused any wight to don any good dede: Fynde me any good/ but if this knotte be the chefe cause: Nedes mote it be good/ that causeth so many good dedes. Euery cause is more and worthyer than thynge caused/ and in that mores possession/ al thinges lesse ben compted. As the kyng is more than his people and hath in possession al his realme after: Right so the knot is more than al other goodes/ thou myght reckey al thynges lasse/ and that to hym longeth o weth in to his mores cause of worshyp and of wyl do turne/ it is els rebel and out of his mores defendyng to Boyde. Right so of euery goodnesse in to the knot and in to the cause of his worshyp o weth to tourne. And trewly euery thyng that hath beyng profytably is good/ but nothyng hath to ben more profytably than this knot: kynges it maintayneth/ and hem their powere to mayntayne: It maketh myssse to ben amended with good gouernaunce in doyng. It closeth hertes so togyder/ that rācour is out thrusten. Who that it lengest bepeth/ lengest is gladed. I trowe (qd I) heretykes and myssemeanyng people hence forwarde wol maintayne this knotte/ for therthorough shul they ben maintayned/ and vtterly wol turne and leaue their olde yuel vnderstandyng & knytte this goodnesse/ and profer so ferre in seruyce/ that name of seruauntes myght they haue. Their iangles shal cease/ me thynketh hem lacketh mater nowe to alege. Certes (quod Loue) if they of good wil thus turned as thou sayst wolen trewly perfourme/ yet shul they be abled party of this blysse to haue: and they wol not/ yet shul my seruaūtes the werre wel susteyne in myn helpe of maintenaunce to the ende. And they for their good trauayle shullen in rewarde so ben meded/ that endeleesse ioye body and soule togyther in this shullen abyden/ there is euer action of blysse without possyble corrupcion/ there is action ꝑpetuel in werke without trauayle/ there is euerlastyng passyse/ without any of labour: contynuel plyte without ceasynge conceyted to endure. No tonge may tel ne hert may thinke the lest poynte of this blysse. God kunge me thyder (qd I than) Contynueth wel (qd she) to the ende/ & thou might not fayle than/ for though thou spede not here/ yet shal the passyon of thy martred lyse ben writtey/ and rodde to soune the great Jupyter that god is of routhe/ ay hygh in the holownesse of heuen/ there he sytte in his trone: and euer thou shalt forwarde ben holden amonge al these heuyns for a knyght/ that myghtest with no penaunce ben disconfyted. He is a very martyr that kuyngly go-

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ynge is gnawen to the bones. Certes (qd I) these ben good wordes of cõforte/ a lytel myne herte is reioyed in a mery wyse. Ye (qd she) and he that [illegible] in heuen seyth more ioye/ than whan he fyrst herde therof speke. So it is (qd I) but wyst I the sothe/ that after disease comforte wolde folowe with blysse/ so as ye haue often declared/ I wolde wel suffre this passyon with the better chere/ but my thought ful sorowe is endelesse/ to thinke how I am cast out of a welfare/ & yet dayneth not this yuel none herte none hede to me warde thiowe/ which thynges wolde greatly me by wayes of comforte dispoite/ to weten in my selfe a lytel with other me ben ymoned: and my sorowes pesen not in her balaunce the weyght of a perse: Slynges of her daunger so heuyly pesen/ they drawe my causes so hye/ that in her eyen they semen but spyght and right lytel.

Dis sor (qd she) heuen with skyes that soule cloudes maken and darke wethers/ with gret tempestes and huge/ maketh the mery dayes with softe shynyng sonnes. Also the yere with drawyth flowres and beautie of herbes and of erth. The same yere maketh spunges and iopte in Vere so to renouel with peynted colours/ that erthe semeth as gay as heuen. Sees that blasteth and with waues thiowith shyppes/ of whiche the lyuyng creatures sor great peryl sor hem dreden: right so ỳ same sees maketh smothe waters and golden saylyng/ and comforteth hem with noble hauen that sirste were so serde. Hast thou not (qd she) lerned in thy youth/ that Jupyter hath in his warderobe bothe garmentes of ioye and of sorowe? What wost thou howe soone he wol turne of the ỳ garment of care/ & clothe the in blysse? parde it is not serre sro the. Lo an olde prouerbe aleged by many wyse: Whan bale is greatest/ than is bote a nye boue. Wherof wyte thou dismaye? hope wel and serue wel/ and that shal the saue/ with thy good byleue.

Ye/ ye (quod I) yet se I not by reason howe this blysse is comyng/ I wote it is contynget/ it may sal on other. D (qd she) I haue mosel to done to clere thyne vnderstandyng and doyde these errours out of thy mynde/ I wol prouue it by reason thy wo may not alway endure. Euery thyng kyndely (qd she) is gouerned & ruled by the heuenly bodyes/ whiche hauen sul werthynge here on erthe/ and after course of these bodyes/ al course of your doynges here ben gouerned and ruled by kynde.

Thou wost wel by cours of planettes al ỳ dayes proceden/ & to euerich of synguler houres be enterhaũged stondmele about/ by submytted worthyng naturally to suffre/ of whiche changes cometh these trãsitory tymes that maketh remouyng of your peres thus stondmele/ euery hath sul might of worthynge/ tyl al seuen han had her cours about. Of which worthynges & possessyon of houres/ ỳ dayes of the wke haue take her names/ after denomination of these seuen planettes. Lo your sõday gynneth at ỳ sirst hour after noon on the saturday/ in whiche hour is than the sonne in sul might of worthyng/ of whom sonday taketh his name. Nexte him solowith Venus/ & after Mercurius/ & than the Moone/ so than Saturnus/ after whõ Jouis/ & than Mars and ayen thã the Sonne/ & so forth be-tyme. houres togider/ in whiche hour gynnyng ỳ seconde day stante the Moone/ as maister sor that tyme to rule/ of whom mõday taketh his name/ and this course solowith of al other dayes generally in doyng. This course of nature of these bodyes chaungyng/ stynten at a certayne terme/ symytted by their sirst kynde/ and of hem al gouernementes in this elemented worlde proceden/ as in spunges/ constellations/ engendrures/ & al that solowen kynde and reson/ wherfore the course that solowith sorowe and ioy/ kyndely moten entrechangen their tymes/ so that alway on wele as alway on wo may not endure. Thus seest thou apertly thy sorowe in to wele mote ben chaunged/ wherfore in suche case to better syde euermore enclyne thou shuldest. Trewly neyt the ende of sorowe anon entreth ioy/ by maner of necessyte it wol ne may non other betyde/ and so thy contygence is disproued: if thou holde this opinion any more/ thy wyt is right leude. Wherfore in sul conclusyon of al this/ thilke Margaryte thou desyrest/ hath ben to the dere in thy herte/ and sor her hast thou suffred many thoughtful diseases/ herafter shal be cause of moche

of moſt mirth and ioye/ and loke how we glad eanſte thou ben/ and ceaſe al thy paſſed heyuneſſe with manyfolde ioyes. And than wol I as blythly here the ſpeken thy myrthes in ioy/ as I now we haue yherde thy ſorowes and thy complaynctes. And if I mowe in aught thy ioye encreaſe/ by my trouthe on my ſpoe ſhal nat be leaued for no maner trauayle/ that I with al my myghtes right blythly wol helpe/ and euer ben redy pou bothe to pleſe. And thā thanked I that lady with al goodly maner ꝑ I worthely conde/ and trewly I was greatly eroyſed in myne hert/ of her ſayre behestes/ & proferd me to be ſtawe in al that ſhe me wolde ordeyne while my lyfe leſted.

Ethynketh (qd I) that ye haue right wel declared/that way to ꝑ ſnot ſhuld not ben in none of theſe diſpreuynge thynges/and nowe order of our purpoſe this aſketh/that ye ſhulde me ſhewe if any way be thyther/ and whiche thilke way ſhulde ben/ ſo that openly maye be ſey/ the verry hye waye in ful confuſyon of theſe other thynges.

Thou ſhalt (quod ſhe) vnderſtande/ that one of thre lyues (as I firſt ſayd) euery creature of mankynde is ſprongen/ and ſo forth proceedeth. Theſe lyues ben thorowe names departed in thre maner of kyndes/ as beſtiallyche/ manlyche/ and reſonablyche/ of whiche two ben vſed by fleſſhely body/ and the thirde by his ſoule. Beſtial among reſonables is forboden in euery lawe and euery ſecte/ bothe in chriſtien and other/ for euery wight diſpyſeth hem that lyueth by luſtes and delytes/ as hem that is thral and bounden ſeruaunt to thynges right foule/ ſuche ben compted werſe than men/ he ſhal nat in ther degre ben rekened/ne for ſuche one alowed. Herebyes ſayne they/ chooſen lyfe beſtial/ that voluptuouſly lyuen/ ſo that (as I firſt ſayde to the) in manly and reſonable lyuing/ our mater was to declare/ but manly lyfe in lyueng after fleſſhe or ells fleſſhly wayes to cheſe/ may nat blyſſe in this knotte be cõquered/ as by reaſon it is proued. Wherfore by reſonable lyfe he muſt neded it haue/ ſithe away is to this knotte/ but nat by the firſte tway lyues/ wherfore nedes mote it ben to the thirde/ and for to lyue in fleſſhe but nat after fleſſh/ is more reſonable thā man lyche rekened by clerkes. Therfore howe this waye cometh in/ I wol it blythely declare.

Se nowe (quod ſhe) that theſe bodily goodes of manliche ſpuenges/ yelden forouſully ſtoundes and ſmertāde houres/ Who ſo wele remembre hem to their endes/ in their worchinges they ben thoughtful and ſore. Right as a bee that hath hadde his hony/ anone as his flyght begynneth to ſtynge: So theſe bodily goodes at the laſte mote awaye/ and than ſtynge they at her goynge/ wherthorough entreth and clene voydeth al blyſſe of this knot.

Forſothe (quod I) me thynketh I am wel ſerued/in ſhewyng of theſe wordes. although I hadde ſpek in reſpecte amonge other great and worthy/ yet had I a ſarre parcel/ as me thought for the tyme/ in fortherīng of my ſuſtenaunce/ whiche while it dured/ I thought me haupnge moſt hony to myne eſtate. I had richeſſe ſuffiſaundly to weyue nede/ I had dignite to be reuerenced in worſhip. Power me thought that I had to ſeye fro myne enemyes and me ſemed to ſhyne in glorie of renoume as manhode aſketh in meane/ for no wyght in myne adminiſtration coude non yuele ne trecherp by fothe cauſe on me putte. Lady your ſelue wetey wel/ that of tho confederacies made by my ſouerayne I was but a ſeruaunt/ and yet moſt meane folke wel fully againſt treaſon thilke matere maynteyne/ in whiche mayntenaunce glouen them ſelfe/ and as often ye haue ſayde/ therof ought nothynge my yuel to be ſayde to me wardes/ ſythen as repētaunt I am tourned/ and no more I thynke/ neither tho thynges ne none ſuche other to ſuſtene/ but vtterly deſirope without medlynge maner/ in al my myghtes. Howe am I nowe caſte out of al ſwetneſſe of blyſſe/ and myſchenouſly ſtongen my paſſed ioye ſorouſully muſte I be wayle/ and lyue as a wretche.

Euery of tho ioyes is tourned in to his contrary: For richeſſe nowe haue I poucrte/ for dignite nowe am I empriſoned/ in ſtede of power wretchednetſſe I ſuffre/ and for glorye of renoume I am nowe diſpiſed/ and foulyſh hatred: thus hath fery fortune/ that ſodenly am I ouerthrowen/ & out of al welth diſpoyled.

Trewly

truthly me thynketh this hap in entre is right harde/ god graunt me better grace or it be al passed/ the offer may ladye me thought right swete. Now we entre (qd Loue) me lyst for to chide. What apieth thy darke dulnesse: wol it not in clearenesse ben sharped. Hens I not by many reasons to the shewed suche bodily goodes fayren to yeue ulysse/ these nought so perfaitly wol not stretche: Shame (qd she it is to say) thou lyest in thy worde. Thou ne hast wyst but right fewe that these bodely goodes had al atones/ comenly they dwellen not togider. He that plente hath in riches/ of his synne is ashamed: another of spunge right noble & well knowe/ but poure sum hadeth he were lefte vnknowe. Another hath these/ but rende of peoples prayseng may he nat haue/ oueral he is hated & defamed of thynges right foule. Another is fewe & femely but disgrate him sayeth: & he that hath deformite is crosed or lame/ or els misshapen & foule disppsed. thus stable these goodes dwellen comenly i one household ben they but spide. Lo ho we restched is youre trusse/ ay thyng that wol nat accorde. Ne thi seth thou dreest thilke plyte thou were in selynesse of fortune/ & thou sayest for that ꝑ selynesse is derked/ thou arte a wretch. Than solo weth this vpon thy wordes/ euery soule resonable of many/ may nat dye/ & if dethe endeth selynesse & maketh wretches/ as nedes of fortune maketh it an ende/ Than soules after dethe of ꝑ body in wretchednesse shulde lyuen But we knowe many that han geten ꝑ ulysse of heuen after their dethe. Ho we thi may this lyfe maken men ulyssful/ that whan it passeth it neuith no wretchednesse/ and many tymes ulysse/ if in this lyfe he can lyue as he shulde. And wolte thou acord with fortune/ ꝑ now we et he first she hath done the tene & sorowe: if ꝑ take to the maner of al glad thynges & sorouful/ thou mayst nat nay it/ that yet/ & namely nature thou stondest in noble plyte in a good gisnyng/ with good forth goyng herafter. And if thou were to lie a wretch for such welth is passed/ why then art thou nat wel fortunate for badde thynges & angrye wretchednesse be passed: Art thou now come first in to the hostry of this lyfe/ or els the bath of this worlde/ art thou now a sodayne gest in to this wretched exile/ knowest there be any thynge in this erthe stable: Is nat thy first arest passed/ ꝑ knowest thy mastal foreye? Ben these nat mortal thynges agon with ignorance of bestial wyt and hast receyued treason in stedfastnesse of bestnes: What cõforte is in thy hert: the sweuenge sykenesse in my seruyce be grouded. And worse thou nat wel as I said/ that deth maketh ende of al fortune: What than/ stodest thou in noble plyte/ lytel hede or tresyng to take/ if thou set fortune passe dyng/ or ele that she fly whit her lyst/ now vp thy syne. Pardy a man hath nothyng so lefe as his lyfe/ & for to holde that he doth al his cure & dilygent trauayle. Than say I thou art ulyssful & fortunat selye/ if thou knowe thy goodes that thou hast yet be loued whiche nothynge may doute/ that they ne ben more worthy than thy lyfe: What is that (qd I) Good contẽplation (qd she) of wel doing in vertue in tyme comyng/ bothe in plesaunce of me & of thy Margaret perle: Hastely thyn hert in ful ulysse with her shalbe eased. Therfore dismay the nat/ fortune i hate greuously a penst thy bodily pson/ ne yet to gret tempest hath she nat sent to the/ sithen the holdyng cables & ankers of thy lyfe/ holden by stydyng so fast/ that thou discomforte the nought of tyme that is now/ ne dispayre the not of tyme to come/ but peuen the comforte in hope of wel doyng/ and of gettyng agayne the double of thy leyng/ with encreasyng lone of thy Margarite perle therto. For this hyderto thou hast had al her ful daunger/ and so thou myght amende al that is myssed/ and al defautes that sometyme thou dydest/ and that now in al thy tyme to that ilke Margarye in ful seruyce of my lore thyne herte hath contynued/ wherfore she ought moche the rather excusyng fro her daungerous sete. These thynges ben yet knyt by the holdyng anker in thy lyue/ and holden mote they: Lo god I pray al these thynges at ful ben perfoumed. For whyle thus anker holdeth I hope thou shalte safely escape/ & whyle thy trewe meanyng seruyce aboute bunge/ in despyte of al falle meaners/ that the of newe hatey/ for this trewe seruyce thou

arte now enuied.

Lenayne

Certayn (q̄ I) amonge thynges I aſked a queſtion/ whiche was the way to the ſnot. Treuly lady he we ſo it be/ I trompt you with queſtions & anſwers/ in ſpekyng of my firſt ſeruice/ I am no we in ful purpoſe in the puche of ꝑ hert/ that thilke ſeruice was an empriſonment/ & alway bad & naughty in no maner to be deſpred. Ne that in getting of the ſnot/ may it nothyng auayle. A wyſe gentyl hert loketh after vertue/ & none other bodily iopes alone. And bycauſe to ſome this/ in the wapes I was ſette/ I wote wel my ſelfe I ha ue erred/ & of the blyſſe fayled/ & ſo out of my way hugely haue I ron. Certes (q̄ ſhe) that is ſothe/ & there thou haſt myſwent/ eſche we ꝑ pathe from hens forwarde I rede. Wonder I treuly why the mortal ſolke of this worlde ſeche theſe wapes outſouth / & it is ꝑued i pour ſelfe. Lo ho we ye ben confounded with errour and folly. The vnawing of very cauſe & way is goodneſſe & vertue. Is there any thynge to the more precious than thy ſelfe: Thou ſhalt haue i thy power/ that thou woldeſt neuer leſe and that in no way may be taken fro the/ and thilke thyng is that is cauſe of this ſnot. And if dethe mowe it nat reue more than an erthly creature/ thilke thynge than abydeth with thy ſelfe ſoule. & ſo our concluſion to make ſuche a ſnot thus getten/ abydeth with this thynge and with ꝑ ſoule/ as long as they laſt. a ſoule dieth neuer/ vertu & goodneſſe euermore with the ſoule endureth/ & this ſnot is ꝑfite blyſſe. Than this ſoule in this blyſſe endleſſe ſhal en durey. Thus ſhal hertes of a trewe ſnot ben eaſed: thus ſhal their ſoules ben pleaſed: thus perpetually in iope ſhal they ſynge. In good trouth (q̄ I) here is a good beginyng/ pene be more of this way. (Q̄ ſhe) I ſaid to the nat longe ſithen/ that reſonable lyfe was one of the thynges of & it was proued to the ſoule. euery ſoule of reaſon hath two thynges of ſtering lyfe/ one in vertue & another in the bodily worldynge: & whan the ſoule is the maiſter ouer the body / than is a man maiſter of him ſelfe: & a man to be a maiſter ouer him ſelfe/ ſpueth in vertue & in goodneſſe/ & as reſon of vertue techeth. ſo the ſoule & the body worchig bine togider lyuen reſonable lyfe/ whiche der den clepen ſelyaide lyuendy/ & thilke is the ꝑ way to this ſnot. theſe olde philoſophers that hadden no knowing of ſamme grace of holy treſoſh alone/ wenden that of pure nature/ withouten any helpe of grace / me might haue ꝑſhoned thother lyuenges/ reſonably haue I lyued: & for I thynke hereafter / if god wol (& I haue ſpace) thilke grace after my feble knowyng declare: I leaue it as at this tyme. But (as I ſaid) he that outforth loketh after the wapes of this ſnot/ conuyng with whiche he ſhulde knowe ꝑ way unforth ſlepeth for the tyme/ wherfore he that wol this way knowe/ muſt leaue the lokyng after falſe wapes outforth / & open the eyen of his conſcience & vnclooſe his herte. Neſt nat he that hath truſt in the bodily lyfe is ſo bely bodily woundes to anoynt in keping from ſmert (for al out may they nat be healed) that of woundes in his true vnderſtanding he taketh no hede/ the knowing eutforth ſlepeth ſo harde/ but anoy as I knowing a waſe/ than gyueth the piery medicines for healyng of his trewe entent / inward: lightly healeth conſcience if it be wel handled. Than muſt nedes these wapes come out of ꝑ ſoule by ſtering lyfe of the body/ & elo wape no man come to ꝑfite blyſſe of this ſnotte: & thus by this waye he ſhal come to the ſnotte/ and to the ꝑfyte felyneſſe that he wende haue had in bodily goodes outforth? Ye (q̄ I) ſhal he haue both ſnot/ riches/ power/ degnite/ & re nome in this maner wape? Ye (q̄ ſhe) ꝑ ſhal I ſhewe the. Is he nat riche that hath ſufficiail re/ & hath the power that no man may anaiſtrey? Is nat great degnite to haue worſhyp and reuerence: & hath he nat gloire of renome whoſe name ꝑpetual is duryng/ & out of nō ber in cōparation? These be thynges that men wenen to getten outforth (q̄ I). Ye (q̄ ſhe) they that loken after a thynge that nought is therof in al ne in ꝑtie/ longe me we they gapen after: That is ſothe (q̄ I): therfore (q̄ ſhe) they that ſechen golde in grene trees / & wene to gader precious ſtones amongſt bynes/ and layne her nettes in mountayns to fyſſhe/ and thinken to hunt I depe ſees after hart & hynde/ and ſechen in erth thilke thynges that ſurmounteth heuen/ What may I of hem ſay: but ſo

lyſſhe

syssse ignorance wrysteth wandrynge wretches by vncouth wayes that shulden be forlete/ & maketh hem vtynde fro the right pathe of trewe way that shulde hem vse. Therfore in generall errour in mysbynde/ depriet thulke goodes by myssse seekyng/ whiche he shulde haue hole & he soughte by reason. Thus goth he begyled of that he sought/ in his hede wen haue ylowe a tape. Nowe (qd I) if a man be vertuous & al in vertue lyueth/ howe hath he al these thynges? That shal I proeuen (q she) What power hath any man to let another of lyuyng in vertue? for punishment or any other deseise/ he take it paciently/ desconfiteth he nat/ the tyrant ouer his soule no power maye haue? Than hath thilke man so tourmented suche power/ yf he nyl be discomfit/ ne ouercome may he nat ben/ sithen pacience his soule ouercometh/ and as nat ouercomen. Suche thyng yt may nat be a maistred/ he hath nede to nothing/ for he hath sufficiaunce yno we to helpe hym selfe. And thilke thyng that thus hath power & sufficiance/ & no tyrant may it reue/ & hath dignite to sette at nought al thynges/ here it is a great dignite that deth may a maistry. Wherfore thilke power sufficiaunce so enclosed with dignite/ by al reson renoume must haue. Thus is thilke riches with sufficiace ye shulde lose after: this is thilke worshypful dignite ye shulde coueyt: this is thilke power of myght/ in whiche ye shulde truste: this is the ilke renoume of glorie that endelesse endureth/ & al nys but substaunce my vertuous lyuyng. Certes (qd I) al this is sothe/ & so I se wel that vertue with ful gripe encloseth al these thynges. Wherfore my sothe I may saye/ by my trouth/ Vertue of my Margarite brought me first in to your seruice/ to haue hyryng with that sewel/ nat so dayn longynges ne softes smale wordes/ but auoyr conuersation togider: & than I seige thentent of her trewe meanyng with stoutshyp vertue of patience/ that she vsed nothynge in payn/ to quyte the wicked treasynges that false tonges ofte in her haue sayde/ I haue sey it my selfe/ goodly forbearaunce hath sprongen out of her sweet/ bonte & ernestie about al other thinges she desyreth in a good mekemanner/ and susteyneth many wicked tales.

TRewly lady to you it were a grete worshyp/ that suche thynges by due chastysment were amended. Ye (qd she) I haue the excused/ al suche thynges as yet mowe nat be redressed: thy Margarites vertue I commende wel the more that paciently suche anoyes susteyneth. Dauid kyng was meke & suffred moche hate & many yuel speches: no dispite ne shame that his enemys him deden/ might nat meue pacience out of his herte/ but euer in one plyte merry he vsed. Wherfore god him selfe toke reuarde to the thynges/ & theron suche punysshment set sal. Trewly by reason it ought be ensaple of drede to al maner peoples myth A man vengeable in wrath no gouernance in punisshment ought to haue. Plato had a custe his seruant to scourge/ & yet cleped he his neibour to pfourme the doynge/ him selfe wolde nat/ lest wrath had him a maistred/ & so myght he haue sayde ony to moche: euermore groudeth vertue sheweth thentent fro within. & trewly I wotte wel for her goodnesse & vertue/ thou hast despysed my seruice to her plesance wel the more/ & thy selfe therto fully haste profered.

Good lady (qd I) is vertue the hye waye to this knot/ that long we haue yhandled? ye for soth (qd she) and without vertue goodly this knot may nat be gotey. Ah nowe I se (quod I) howe vertu in me fayleth/ & I as a seer tre without burionyng or fruite alwaye welke/ & so I stonde in despeyre of this noble knot/ for vertue in me hath no maner worshynge. A wyde where aboute haue I trauepled. Peace (qd she) of thy first way thy traueple is in yedel/ & as touchynge the seconde way/ I se wel thy meanyng. Thou woldest conclude me if yt coudest/ bycause I brought the to seruice/ and euery of my seruantes I helpe to come to this blysse/ as I sayd here beforne: & thou saydest thy selfe/ thou mightest nat be holpen as thou wenyst/ bycause that vertue in the fayleth. & this blysse pfitly without vertue maye nat be gotey/ thou wenest of these wordes contradiction to folowe. Parde at the hardest I haue no seruant but he be vertuous in dede & thought I brought the in my seruice/ yet arte thou nat my seruant: but I say/ thou mightest so wercke in vertue herafter/ that than shalt thou be my seruant

ſeruaunt/ and as for my ſeruant acompted. For habyte maketh no monke/ ne wearynge of gylte ſpurres maketh no knyght. Neuer the later/ my conſorte of thyne herte/ yet wol I other wyſe anſwere. Certes lady (quod I the) ſo ye muſte nedes/ or elſe I had nygh caught ſuche a cordiacle for ſorowe/ I wotte it wel I ſhulde it neuer haue recouered. And therfore now we I praye to enforme me in this/ or elſe I holde me without recouerye. I may nat long endure tyl this leſſon be lerned/ and of this myſchefe the remedy knowen. Now we (quod ſhe) be nat wrothe/ for there is no man on lyue that maye come to a precious thyng longe coueyted/ but he ſomtyme ſuffre teneful diſeaſes/ and wenyſt thy ſelfe to ben vnlyche to al other/ that maye nat ben: And with the more ſorowe that a thynge is getten/ the more he hath ioye/ the ilke thyng after wardes to kepe/ as it fareth by chyldren in ſchole that for lernynge arne beaten/ whan their leſſon they forgetten/ cõmenly after a good diſciplynyng with a yerde/ they kepe right wel doctrine of their ſchole.

RIght with theſe wordes/ on this lady I threwe vp myne eyen to ſe her countenaunce and her chere/ and ſhe aperceyuyng this fantaſye in myne herte/ gan her ſemblaunt goodly on me caſte/ and ſayde in this wyſe.

It is wel knowe/ bothe to Reaſon and experience in doynge/ euery actyue worcheth on his paſſyue/ and whan they ben togider/ actyue and paſſyue ben reſraped by theſe philoſophers/ if fyre be in place chafynge thynge able to be chafed or hete/ and thilke thynges ben ſette in ſuche a diſtaunce that the one may werche/ the other ſhal ſuffre. Thilke Margarite thou deſpeſt is ful of Vertue/ and able to be actyue in goodneſſe: but euery herbe ſheweth his Vertue outforthe from within/ the ſonne peneth lyght that thynges may be ſeyn. Euery fyre heteth thilke thyng that it neyghed and it be able to be hete/ Vertue of this Margarite outforth worthe/ and nothynge is more able to ſuffre worchyng or worke eaſche of the actyue/ but paſſyue of the ſame actyue/ and no paſſyue to Vertues of this Margarite/ but the in al my bonet can I fynde/ ſo that her Vertue muſte nedes on the werche/ in what place euer thou be/ within diſtaunce of her worthyneſſe/ as her very paſſyue thou arte cloſed: but Vertue may the nothynge profyte/ but thy deſpyte be perſourmed and al thy ſorowes ceaſed. Ergo through werchynge of her Vertue thou ſhalte eaſely ben holpen and driuen out of al care/ and welcome to this Margarite by the deſpited. Lady (quod I) this is a good leſſon in gramyng of my ioye: but were ye wel forſothe/ thoughe I ſuppoſe ſhe haue moche Vertue/ I wolde my ſpouſayle were proued/ and than maye I lyue out of doute/ and reioyce me greatly in thynkyng of tho Vertues ſo ſhewed. I herde the ſay (quod ſhe) at my begynnyng whan I receyued the firſte for to ſerue that thy iewel/ thilke Margarite thou deſpieſt/ was cloſed in a muſſle with a blewe ſhel. Ye forſothe (quod I) ſo I ſayde/ and ſo it is. Wel (quod ſhe) euery thyng kyndely ſheweth it ſelfe: this iewel cloſed in a blewe ſhel/ excellence of coloures ſheweth Vertue from within/ and ſo euery wight ſhulde rather loke to the propre Vertue of thynges/ than to her foraine goodes. If a thyng be engendred of good mater/ comenly and for the more parte it folowith after the congelement Vertue of the firſt mater/ and it be not corrupt with Ayre/ to procede with encreaſe of good Vertues: ebe right ſo it fareth of badde. Certeyn great excellence in Vertue of lynage/ for the more parte diſcendeth by kynde to the ſucceſſyon in Vertues to folowe. Wherfore I ſaye/ the colours of euery Margarit ſheweth from within the fynneſſe in Vertue. Kyndely ſeuen whan euery wether is a ſofte/ apereth in maners eyr of colours in ilke we/ ſtedfaſtneſſe in peace betokenyng within and without: Margarite is engendred by heuenly dewe/ and ſheweth in it ſelfe by fynneſſe of colours/ whether the engendrure were moſed on more we or on eue: thus ſayth kynde of this perle. This precious Margarite that thou ſerueſt/ ſheweth it ſelfe diſcended by nobley of Vertue from this heuenſych dewe/ nouriſſed and congeled in mylkneſſe/ that mother is of al Vertues/ and by

werbes that may sene without ony signyfi-
cation of the colowres/ bey shewed mercy and
pyte in the herte with peace to al other/ and
al this is prouyded in a mussile/ who so redily
these vertues soberly. Al thyng that hath sowle
is reduced in to good by meane thynges/ as
thus: Ihy to god man is reduced by soules re-
sonable/ and so sothe berbes or bodyes that
mowe not mouen/ after place bey reduced in
to manne/ by berbes meue that mouyn from
place to place: so that thilke bodyes that hay
selynge soules/ and mowe not from places/
holden the so west degree of soulynge thynges
in selynge/ and suche bey reduced in to man
by meanes. So it solowth / the mussile as
mother of al vertues/ halte the place of mese-
nesse to hes so west degree discendeth downe of
heuen/ and there by a maner of virgyne en-
gendrure arne these Margarytes engendred/
and afterwarde congeled. Wade not mese-
nesse so lowe the hye heuen to enclose & catche
out therof so noble a dewe/ that after congele-
ment a Margaryte with endelesse vertue and
euerlastyng ioy was with ful vessel of grace
peuen to euery creature/ that goodly woide it
receyue. Certes (quod I) these thynges bey
right noble/ I haue er this herde these same
sawes. Than (quod she) thou woste wel
these thynges bay sothe: ye forsothe (qð I)
at the ful. Nowe (quod she) that this Mar-
garyte is ful of vertue it is wel proued/ wher-
fore some grace/ some mercy amonge other
vertues/ I wotte right wel on the shal des-
cende: ye (quod I) yet wolde I haue better
declared vertues in thes Margaryte/ syndely
to bey gnolded. What shal I shewe the (qð she)
and thou woldest it lerne? Lerne (quod I)
what ordeth suche wordes: Wete ye nat wel
lady youre selfe that al my cure/ al my dyli-
gence/ and al my might haue turned by youre
counsayle/ in pursuance of that perle/ al my
thought and al my studye/ with youre helpe
despeth/ in wo-shyppe thilke newel to encrease
al my trauayle and al my besynesse in youre
seruyce/ thes Margaryte to gladde in some
salue: me were leuer her honour/ her plea-
saunce/ and her good chere than owe me for to
be mayntayned and kept/ and I of suche
thynge in her sykynge to be cause/ than al the
welthe of bodyly goodes ye coude reckon. And
wolde neuer god/ but I put my selfe in great
vnperdye of al that I wolde/ that is nowe
no more but my syse alone/ rather than I
shulde suffre thilke newel in any poynte bey
vnmynished/ as ferre as I may suffre/ and with
my mightes stretche. Suche thyng (qð she)
maye moue further thy grace/ and the in my
seruyce auaunce. But nowe (quod Loue)
wyste thou graunte me thilke Margaryte to
bey good: O good good (qð I) why tempte
ye me and tene with suche maner speche: I
wolde graunt that/ thoughe I shulde anone
dye/ and by my trouthe fyght in the quarel/ if
any might wolde contrepiede. It is so moche
the fyghter (quod Loue) to proue our entent.
Ye (quod I) but yet wolde I here howe ye
wolde proue that she were good by reasona-
ble sleyt/ that it mowe not bey denyed/ for al-
thoughe I knowe and so dothe many other/
manyfolde goodnesse and vertue in this Mar-
garyte bey punted/ yet some men there bey
that no goodnesse speken: and wher euer youre
wordes bey herde and youre reasons bey she-
wed/ suche quel spekers lady by auctoute of
youre excellence/ shullen bey stopped and asha-
med. And more they that hay none acquayn-
taunce in her persone/ yet mowe they knowe
her vertues/ and bey the more enfourmed in
what wyse they mowe sette their hertes/ whan
hem lyste in to youre seruyce any entre maner:
for trewly al this to begynne/ I wote wel my
selfe that thilke newel is so precious perle/ as
a womanly woman in her kynde/ in whome
of goodnesse/ of vertue/ and also of answe-
ryng/ shappe of lymmes/ and setures so wel
in al poynctes acordyng/ nothyng sayleth: I
leue that kynde her made with great studye/
for kynde in her person nothyng hath forget/
and that is wel sene. In euery good wyghtes
herte she hath grace of cōmendyng and of ver-
tuous prayseyng. Alas that euer kynde made
her derely/ saue onely in that I wot wel/ that

Nature in fourmynge of
her in no thynge
hath erred.

Certes (quod Loue) thou haste wel begonne / and I asse the this questyon: Is not in general euery thynge good: I not (quod I) No (quod she) saue not god euery thynge that he made/ and werne right good. Than is wonder (qõ I) howe yuel thynges comen a place/ sythen that al thynges werey right good. Thus (qõ she) I wol declare euerychē qualyte and euery action/ and euery thyng that hath any maner of beynge it is of god/ and god it made/ of whom is al goodnesse & al beyng/ of him is no badnesse: badde to be is naught: good to be is somwhat/ and therfore good and beyng is one in vnderstandyng. Howe may this be (quod I) for often han shrewes me assailed/ and moche badnesse therin haue I founden/ and so me semeth bad to be somwhat in synde. Thou shalt (qõ she) vnderstande ỹ suche maner badnesse/ whiche is vsed to purpose wronge doers is somwhat/ and god it made and beyng hath/ and that is good: other badnesse no beyng hath vtterly/ it is in the negatyue of somwhat/ and that is naught/ and nothyng beyng. The parties essencial of beyng arne sayd in double wyse/ as that it is/ and these parties ben foulde in euery creature/ for al thyng a this halfe the first beyng is beyng through partycipacion/ taakyng partie of beyng/ so that euery creature is difference betwene beynge and of him through whom it is and his owyn beyng: right as euery good is a maner of beyng/ so is it good thorowe beyng/ for it is naught other to be: and euery thyng though it be good it is not of him selfe good/ but it is good by that it is ordynable to the great goodnesse. This dualyte after clerkes determissyon is founden in euery creature/ be it neuer so syngle of onhed. ye (qõ I) but there as it is sayde that god saue euery thynge of his makyng/ and were right good/ as your selfe sayd to me not longe tyme sythen. I asse whether euery creature is sayde good/ throughe goodnesse vnfourmed eyther ells fourmed/ and afterwarde if it be accepte vtterly good? I shal say the (quod she) these great passed clerkes han demyded good in to good beyng alone/ and that is nothynge but good/ for nothynge is good in that wyse but god. Also in good by partycipacion/ and that is ycleped good/ for farre sette and reparsentatyue of goodly goodnesse/ and after this manyfolde good is sayd/ that is to saye/ good in synde and good in gendre/ and good of grace/ and good of ioy. Of good in synde Austen saythe/ al that ben ben good: But perauntre thou woldest wete whether of hem selfe it be good/ or ells of anothers goodnesse/ for naturel goodnesse of euery substaunce is nothing ells than his substancial beyng/ whiche is yclaped goodnesse/ after comparyson that he hath to his first goodnesse/ so as it is inductatyse by meanes i to the first goodnesse. Boece sheweth this thynge at the ful/ that this name good is in general name in synde/ as it is cõparysoned generally to his principal ende/ whiche is god knotte of al goodnesse. Euery creature erpeth god ỹ made/ and so they han ful apetyd to thilke god by affection/ suche as to hem longeth: and in this wyse al thynges ben good of ỹ gret god/ whiche is good alone. This wonder thyng (quod I) howe ye haue by many reasons proued my first waye to be errour and misgoyng/ and cause of badnesse and feble menynge in the grounde ye alleged to be roted: whence is it that suche badnesse hath sprunges/ sythen al thynges thus in general ben good/ and badnesse hath no beyng/ as ye haue declared: I wene if al thynges ben good/ I might than with the first way in that good haue ended/ and so by goodnesse haue comen to blysse in your seruyce despyte. A thyng (quod she) is good by beyng in partycipacion out of the firste goodnesse/ whiche goodnesse is corrupte by badnesse/ and badde meanyng maners: god hath in good thynges that they ben good by beyng/ and not in yuel/ for there is absence of rightful loue/ for badnesse is nothynge but onely yuel wyl of the vser/ and through giltes of the doer/ wherfor at the gynnyng of the worlde/ euery thyng by him selfe was good/ and in vniuersal they werne right good. An eye or a hande is fayrer and betterer in a body sette in his syndely place/ than from the body disseuered. Euery thyng in his syndely place being syndely/ good dothe werrthe/ and out of that place voyded/

it dis-

it dissolueth and is defouled hym selue. Our noble god in glysterande wyse by armony this worlde ordeyned/ as in portrayture stoned with colours medled/ in whiche blakke and other derke coloures cõmenden the golden and the asured paynture/ euery parte in Symetrie plast one besyde another/ more for other glysterith: ryght so lytle sayre maketh ryght sayre more glarious/ and right so of goodnesse and of other thynges in vertue. Wherfore other badde/ and not so good persones as this Margarite that we han of this matier/ peuen by the ayre lytel goodnesse and lytel vertue/ ryght moche goodnesse and vertue in thy Margarite to ben proued/ in shynynge wyse to be founde and shewed. How we shulde euer goodnesse of peace haue ben knowe/ but if vnpeace sometyme regne/ and moche yuel wrothe? How we shulde mercy ben proued and no trespeace were/ by due inflyction to be punysshed? Therfore grace & goodnesse of a wight to founde/ the sorouful hertes in good meanynge to endure/ ben comforted/ vnyte and accorde betwene hertes vnyte in ioye to abyde. What wenest thou I reioyce or els accompte hym amonge my seruauntes that pleaseth Pallas/ in vndoynge of Mercurye/ al be it that to Pallas he be knytte vp lytle of lawe/ not accordyng to reasonable conscience: and Mercurie in doynge haue grace to ben suffered: or els hym that weneth the moone for sapientisse of the eye sterre. To other whyle by nyghtes syght of the moone/ greatly comforteth in derke thoughtes and blynde. Understandyng of soule peueth great gladnesse: Who so syste not byleue whan a sothe tale is shewed/ adewe and a dõlye his name is entred. Wyse folke and worthy in gentylesse bothe of vertue and of lyuynge/ peuen ful credence in sothnesse of soule with a good hert/ there as good euydence or experience in doynge shewth not the contrarye. Thus mightest thou haue sul prese in thy Margarytes goodnesse/ by cõmendement of other ieweles badnesse/ and pucknesse in doyng. Stoundemele diseases peueth seuerall sources in ioye.

Nowe by my trouthe (quod I) this is wel declared that my Margarye is good/ for sythen other ben good/ and she passeth manye other in goodnesse and vertue/ wherthroughe by maner necessarye she muste be good: and goodnesse of this Margaryte is no thynge els but vertue/ wherfore she is vertuous/ and if there fayled any vertue in any syde/ there were lacke of vertue: badde nothynge els it me may be/ but lacke and waute of good and goodnesse/ and so shulde she haue that same lacke/ that is to sayr badde/ and that maye not be/ for she is good/ and that is good me thynketh al good: and so by consequence me semeth vertuous and no lacke of vertue to haue. But the sonne is not knowe but he shyne/ ne vertuous herbes but they haue her synde werkynge/ ne vertue but it stretche in goodnesse or profyte to another/ is no vertue. Than by al wayes of reason/ sythen mercy and pytie ben moste commended amonge other vertues/ and they myght neuer ben shewed refressshement of helpe and of comforte/ but nowe at my moste nede/ and that is the synde werkynge of these vertues: trewly I wene I shal not varye from these helpes.

Fyre and if he yeue none heate/ for fyre is not demed. The sonne but he shyne/ for sonne is not accompted. Water but it wete/ the name shal ben chaunged. Vertue but it werche/ of goodnesse dothe it sayle/ and in to his contrarye the name shal ben reuersed/ and these ben impossyble: wherfore the contradictorie that is necessarye/ nedes muste I leue.

Certes (quod she) in thy person and out of thy mouthe these wordes syen wel to ben said/ and in thyne vnderstandyng to be leued/ as in entent of this Margaryte alone: and here nowe my speche in conclusyon of these wordes.

IN these thinges (quod she) that me lyst nowe to shewe openly/ shal be founde the mater of thy sikenesse/ & what shal ben the medicyn ꝑ may be thy sorowes lysse/ & sothl

as wel the as al other that amysse haue erred/ and out of the way walked/so that any drope of good wyl in amendement ben dwelled in their hertes. Prouerbes of Salomon openly teacheth/ howe somtyme an innocent walked by ỹ way in blyndnesse of a derke night/ whom mette a woman (if it be lefely to saye) as a strumpet arayed/redily purueyed in turnynge of thoughtes with beyne ianglynges/ and of rest impacient by dissymulacion of my termes/sayeng in this wyse: Come and be we dronken of our swete pappes/ vse we couetous collynges. And thus drawen was this innocent/as an oxe to the larder. Lady (quod I) to me this is a queynte thynge to vnderstonde: I praye you of this parable declare me the entent. This innocent (quod she) is a scholer lernynge of my lore/ in sechyng of my blysse/ in whiche thynge the daye of his thought turnyng enclyneth in to eue/ and the sonne of very lyght saplinge/ maketh derke nyght in his commynge. Thus in derkenesse of many doutes he walketh/ and for blyndenesse of vnderstandynge/ he ne wote in what waye he is in: forsothe suche one may lightly ben begyled. To whome came loue fayned/ not clothed of my lyuery/ but vnlefful lustye habyte/ with softe speche and mery/and with fayre honyed wordes heretykes and misse menynge people sklereth and wympleth their errours. Austen wytnesseth of an heretyke that in his first begynnynge he was a man right expert in resones/ and swete in his wordes/ and the werkes miscorden. Thus fareth fayned loue in her first werchynges: thou knowest these thynges for trewe/ thou haste hem proued by experience. Somtyme in doyng to thyne owne person/in whiche thyng thou hast founde mater of mokel disease/ Was not fayned loue redily purueyed thy wyttes to catche and tourne thy good thoughtes? trewly she hath wounded the conscience of many with flousshynge of mokel ianglyng wordes: and goodworthe thanked I it for no glose/ I am gladde of my prudence thou haste so manly her beyned. To me arte thou mochel holden/ that in thy fynde course of good meanyng I returne thy mynde: I trowe ne had I shewed the thy Margarye/thou haddest neuer returned. Of first in good parfyte ioye was euer fayned loue impacēt/as the water of Syloe/ whiche euermore floweth with stylnesse and pmp noyse/tyl it come nyghe the bunke/ and than gynneth it so out of measure to bolne/ with nouelleries of chaungyng stormes/ that in course of euery remynyng it is in poynte to spyl al his circute of cambes. Thus fayned loue priuely at the fullest of his flowynge/ newe stormes debate to arayse. And al be it that Mercurius often with hole vnderstandynge knowen suche perylous maters/ yet Venerians so lusty ben and so leude in their wyttes/ that in suche thynges right lytel or naught don they sese/and wryen and cryen to their selawes: here is blysse/ here is ioye/ and thus in to one same errour/ mokel folke they drawen. Come they sayne/ and be we dronken of our pappes/that ben fallas and lyeng glose/ of whiche mowe they not souke mylke of helthe/ but derkly venym and poyson corruption of sorowe. Wylde of fallas/ is venym of discrete: Wylde of lyeng glose is venym of corruption. Lo what thynge cometh out of these pappes: vse we coueyted collynges/ despyse we and meddle we falle wordes with sote/ and sote with falle/ trewly this is the sorquesse of fayned loue/ nedes of these surfettes sickenesse must folowe. Thus as an oxe to thy langoring deth were thou drawen/ the sote of the smoke hath the al defased. Euer the deper thou somtyme wadest the soner thou it founde: if it had the fylled it had be lytel wonder. But on that other syde my trewe seruaunt not fayned ne discrete conne/sothly their doynge is open/ my foundement endureth/be the burthen neuer so great/euer in one it lasteth: it peuceth lyse and blysful goodnesse in the lowe endes/ though the gynnynges ben sharpe. Thus of two contraries/ contrarye ben the effectes. And so thylke Margarye thou seruest shal sene the by her seruyce out of perylous trybulacion delyuered/ because of her seruyce in to newe disease fallen/ by hope of amendement in the laste ende/ with ioye to be gladded/ wherfore of fynde pure/ her mercy with grace of good helpe shal she

graunt

Of nombre ſayne theſe ſterres that it is naturel ſome of diſcrete thynges/ as in tellynge one/ two/ thre and ſo forth: but amonge al nombres thre is determyned for moſte certayne. Wherfore in nombre certayne this/ werke of my beſy ſtudyneſſe I thynke to ende and parfourme. Enſample by this worlde in thre tymes is deuyded: of whiche the firſte is cleped Demarion/ that is to ſay/ goyng out of trewe way/ and al that tho dyeden/ in hel were they punyſſhed for a mans ſynne/ tyl grace & mercy ſette hem thence/ and there ended the firſte tyme. The ſeconde tyme laſteth from the cõmyng of mercyable grace/ vntyl the ende of tranſytoure tyme/ in whiche is ſhewed the true way in foldoynge of the badde/ and that is cleped tyme of grace: and that thynge is not yeuen by deſerte of yeldynge one benefyte for another/ but onely through goodneſſe of the yeuer of grace in thilke tyme. Who ſo can wel vnderſtande/ is shapen to be ſaued in ſouled blyſſe. The thirde tyme ſhal gyn whan trãſytoure thynges of worldes hap made their ende/ and that ſhal bey in ioye/ glorie/ and reſt/ both body and ſoule/ that wel hap deſerued in the tyme of grace. And thus in that heuen togyther ſhul they dwel perpetuelly without any ymagynatyue yuel in any halue. Theſe tymes are ſygured by tho thre dayes that our god was cloſed in erthe/ and in the thirde aroſe/ ſhewyng our reſurrection/ to ioye and blyſſe of tho that it deſerueth/ by his mercyable grace. So this ſeuende boke in thre maters accordaunt to tho tymes/ ſlyghtly by a good vnderſtandynge may bey vnderſtonde/ as in the firſte errour of myſſe goynge is ſhewed/ with ſorowful pyne punyſſhed is cryed after mercy. In the ſeconde is grace in good waye proued/ whiche is ſaylynge without deſerte/ thylke firſt myſſe amendynge in correction of tho errours and euyl waye to brynge/ with comforte of welfare in to amendement weyynge. And in the thirde ioye and blyſſe graunted to hym that wel cannot deſerue it/ and hath ſauour of vnderſtandynge in the tyme of grace. Thus in ioye of my thirde boke ſhal the mater be tyl it

P.p.p.iii. ende.

ſtrait/ and els I ſhal her ſo ſtrayne/ that with pyte ſhal ſhe bey vnapayred. Remembre in thyne herte how we ſourpoſly ſomtyme to thyne Margaryte thou trſpaſeſt/ and in a great wyſe ayenſt her thou forſeyeſt: kepe ayen thy mynde/ and ſhow we thyne owne gyltes. What goodneſſe/ what bountie/ with moſel ſolowynge pyte ſounde thou in that tyme: Were thou not goodly accepted in to grace: by my plurſynge was ſhe to forpeuneſſe enclyned. And after I her ſtyred to drawe the to houſe/ and yet wendeſt thou vtterly for euer haue bey refuſed. But wel thou woſt/ ſythen that I in ſuche ſharpe diſeaſe myght ſo greatly aſwaple/ what thynkeſt in thy wyt: how we ſerre maye my wytte ſtretche: And thou lache not on thy ſyde I wol make the ſnotir: Certes in thy good beryng I wol acorde with the pſauter. I haue ſonde Dauid in my ſeruyce true/ and with holy oyle of peace and of reſt longe by ſyn deſpred/ vtterly he ſhal be anoynted. Truſte wel to me/ and I wol the not fayle. The leanyng of the firſt way with good herte of contynuaunce/ that I ſe in the grounded/ this purpoſe to parfourme/ drawyth me by maner of coſtrainyng/ that neded muſt I bey thyne helper: although myne a whyle be taryed/ it ſhal come at ſuche ſeaſon/ that thy thought ſhal bey ioyed. And wolde neuer god/ ſythen thyne herte to my reaſones arne aſſented/ and openly haſte confeſſed thyne aſmyſſe goynge/ and now we crieſt after mercy/ but if mercy ſolowed: thy blyſſe ſhal bey redy awaye/ thou ne woſt ſo ſone. Now be a good chylde I rede. The ſynde of vertues in thy Margaryte reherſed/ by ſtrength of me in thy perſon ſhal werriſe. Comforte the in this/ for thou mayſt not miſcary. And theſe wordes ſayde/ ſhe ſtreyght her on length and reſted a whyle.

¶ Thus endeth the ſeconde booke/ and here after folowyth the thirde boke.

ende. But special cause I haue in my hert to make this processe of a Margarit perle/ that is so precious a gēme with clere & lyteł/of whi che stones or it wel/the tonges of ye Englisth people tourneth the rizt names/ & clepeth hem Margery perles: thus Varyeth our speche frō many other langages. For trewly latyn/ frenche/ and many mo other langages cleapeth hem Margery perles/ the name Margarites or Margarite perles: wherfore in that de nompnacion I wol me aroide to other mens tonges/ in that name clepping. These clerkes that treaten of Spndes/ & studyen out the proprtie there of thynges/ sayne the Margarite is a lytel whyte perle/throughout holowe and rounde/and vertuous/and oy the see spdes in the more Britayne in muscle shelles of ỳ heuenly dewe the best ben engendred: in whiche by experience ben founde thre fayre Vertues. One is/it peueth comforte to the selyng spyrites in bodily persones of reason. Another is good/ it is profytable helthe ayenst passyons of foule mens hertes. And the thirde it is nedeful and noble in staunchyng of bloode/ there els to moche wolde out ren. To whiche perle and Vertues me lyst to liken at this tyme Philosophie with her thre speces/that is natural and moral/and resonable: of whiche thynges hereth what sayne these great clerkes. Philosophie is knowyng of deuynly & manly thinges ioyned with studye of good lyuyng/ and this stante in two thynges/ that is conynge and opinyon: conynge is whan a thyng by certayne reson is cōceyued. But wiethes and fooles and leude men/ many wyl conceyue a thyng and mayntayne it as for sothe/ though reson be in the contrarye/wherfore conynge is a straunger. Opinyon is whyle a thyng is in non certayne/ and hydde from mens bery knowlegyng/and by no parfyte reason fully declared/as thus: if the sonne be so mokel as men wenen/ or els if it be more than the erthe. For in sothnesse the certayne quantyte of that planet is vnknowen to erthly dwellers/ and yet by opinyon of some men it is holden for more than mydle erth. The first spece of philosophie is naturel/ whiche in kyndely thynges treten/and sheweth causes of heuen/ and strength of kyndely course: as by arsmetrike/ grometry/ musyke/ & by astronomye/ techeth Wayes and course of heuens/ of planetes/and of sterres aboute heuen and erthe/ and other eleméntes. The seconde spece is moral/ whiche in order of lyuyng maners techeth/and by reson proueth Vertues of soule moste worthy in our lyueng/whiche ben prudence/ iustyce/ temperaunce/ and strength. Prudence is goodly wyt/dome in knowyng of thynges. Strength boydeth al aduersites alyche euen. Temperaunce distroyeth berstyal lyueng/ with esy bearyng. And iustyce rightfully ingreth/ and ingyng departeth to euery wight that is his owne. The thirde spece turneth in to reason of vnderstandyng/ al thynges to be sayd soth and discussed/ & that in two thynges is deuyded:one is arte/another is rethorike/in whiche two al lawes of mans reason ben grounded or els maintayned. And for this booke is al of loue/and therafter beareth his name/ and philosophie and lawe muste here to aroiden by their clergyal discriptions: as philosophie for loue of wisdome is declared: Lawe for mayntenaunce of peace is holden/ and these with loue must nedes aroiden/therfore of hem in this place haue I touched. Dide of honest thinges & honest maner of lyuynge in vertues with right ful ingemēt in causes and profitable administration in cōmynalties of realmes & cytes/by cuenhed profitably to raugne/not by singuler auantage ne by prine enuy/ne by foleyn purpose in coueitise of worship or of goodes/ben disposed in open vulte shewed/ by loue philosophy/& lawe/& yet loue to soyn al other. Wherfore as susterne in vnite they aroiden & one ende that is peace & rest/ they causen nouf shinge/ & in the hope mayntenyng to endure.

Nowe than/ as I haue declared: my boke acordeth with discription of thre thynges/ & the Margarit in Vertue is lykened to philosophy/ with her thre speces. In whiche maters euer twey ben acordaunt with bodily reason/ & the thirde with the soule: But in cōclusyon of my boke & of this Margarite perle in knityngē togider lawe by thre sondre maners shalbe lykened/that is to saye/ lawe/ right/ & custome/ whiche I wol declare: al that is lawe cometh

of

of goddes ordynaunce by fynely wourhyng/ & thise thynges ordayned by mānes wyt/ any peruerse right/ which is ordayned by many maneres & in cōstitucion written: but custome is a thyng that is accepted for right or for lawe/ there as lawe & right fayleth/ & there is no difference/ whether it come of scripture or of reason. Wherfore it sheweth that lawe is fynely gouernaunce: Right cometh out of mānes p vaile reson: & custome is of cōmen vsage by length of tyme vsed/ & custome nat writte is vsage/ & if it be writte cōstitutyon it is p'writtey & peruerse: But lawe of fynde is cōmen to euery nation/ as cōiunction of man and woman in loue/ succession of children in heritāce restitucion of thyng by strength takey or lent/ and this lawe among al other halte the soueraynest grece in worshyp/ Whiche lawe began at the begynnyng of reasonable creature/ it varyed yet neuer for no chaungyng of tyme: cause forsothe in ordaynyng of lawe/ was to constrayne mens hardynesse in to peace/ and withdrawyng his pryde wyl/ and turnyng mastyre in to goodnesse/ and that innocence ysbersly withouten tenefull anoye amonge thē wes safely might inhabyte by protection of safeconducte/ so that the shewes harme for harme by bridle of ferdenesse shulden restrayne. But forsothe in fynely lawe nothyng is cōmended/ but such as goddes wyl hath confirmed/ ne nothyng denyed but cōtrarpousie of goddes wyl in heuen: ese than al lawes or custome/ or ele cōstitucion by vsage or writyng that cōtrarpen lawe of fynde/ vtterly ben repugnaunt and aduersarye to our goddes wyl of heuen. Trewly lawe of fynde for goddes owne lusty wyl is trewly to maintayne/ vnder whose lawe (I vnworthy) bothe professe and require arme obedyence and boundey to this Margarite perle/ as by knotte of loues statutes and stablysshment in fynde/ whiche that goodly maye not ben withsetten. Lo vnder this bonde am I constrayned to abyde/ and may vnder lyuyng lawe ruled: by that lawe cometh after desertes to ben rewarded by payn or by mede/ but if merry weyue the payne: so then be pent/ reasonfully may be sey/ that merry bothe right and lawe passeth/ therin of al these maters is the best clere vnderstandyng/ to wete at thende of this thirde boke ful knowing thorowe goddes grace/ I thynke to make neuerthelater/ yet if these thynges han a good and a sleight inserr/ whiche that can souke hony of the harde stone/ oyle of the drye rocke/ may lyghtly sele nobley of mater I my feude ymagination closed. But for my boke shal be of ioye (as I said) & I so serue set fro thilke place/ fro whens gladnesse shulde come my corde is to shorte to set my bokket ouȝt catch of that water/ & fewe men be abouten my corde to eche/ & many in ful purpose ben redy it shorter to make/ & to enclose thentre/ that my bokket of ioye nothing shulde catch/ but empty returne/ my careful sorowes to encrese. & if I dye for payne/ that were gladnesse at their hertes. Good lorde sende me water in to the cop of these mountayns/ & I shal drynke therof/ my thurstes to stanch: & sey these be cōfortable welles in to helth of goodnesse of my sauiour am I holpen. And yet I saye more/ the house of ioye to me is nat opened. How dare my sorouful goost than in any mater of gladnesse thynken to trete? for euer sobbynges & complayntes be redy refrete in his meditatiōe/ as werres in manyfold stoundes cōmyng about I not than. And therfore what maner of ioye coude endite/ but yet at dore shal I knocke/ if the key of Dauid wolde the locke vnshyt/ & he bring me in/ whiche that childrens tōges both openeth & closeth. Whose spirite/ where he wel worcheth/ departyng goodly as him lyketh.

Now to goddes laude & reuerence/ profite of the redere/ amendement of maners of ȳ herers encreasyng of worshyp among loues seruauntes/ releuyng of my hert in to grace of my wel/ & frendship pleasance of this perle. I am steered in this makyng/ & for nothyng els: & if any good thyng to mānes lyking in this scripture be founde/ thanketh the maister of grace/ whiche ȳ of that good & al other is author/ & principal doer. And if ony thing be insufficient or ele mysseyng/ with that ȳ the kyndnesse of myne vnable cōnyng/ for body in disese anoyeth the vnderstandyng in soule. A diseseful habitation letteth ȳ wytte many thinges/ & namely in soth we. The custome neuer the later of

loue/be long tyme of ſeruice in termes I thiſbe to purſue/ whiche bey ſpuely to peue vnderſtá dyng in other thynges. But no we to enſoun the of this Margarites goodneſſe/ I may her nat halſe preyſe. Wherfore nat ſhe for my boke/but this boke for her is worthy to be cõmended/tho my boke be leude: right as thiges nat for places/ but places for thynges ought to be deſpred and prayſed.

Nowe (qõ Loue) trewly thy wordes I haue wel vnderſtode. Certes me thynketh hem right good/ & me wõdreth why thou ſo lightly paſſeſt in the lawe. Sothly (qõ I) my wyt is leude & I am right blynde & that mater depe/ howe ſhulde I than haue waded/ lightly myght I haue drenched & ſpilte ther my ſelfe. Yea (qͦ ſhe) I ſhal helpe ꝑ to ſwym. For right as lawe punyſſheth vnkers of preceptes/& the cõtrary doers of the written conſtitutions: right ſo a pẽwarde/lawe rewardeth & peueth mede to hẽ that lawe ſtrengthen. By one lawe this rebel is puniſſhed & this innocent is meded/ꝑ ſhrewe is enpriſoned & this rightful is corowned. The ſame lawe that ioyneth by wedlocke without forſakyng/the ſame lawe peueth ſpbel of depoſition bycauſe of deuorce both demed & declared. Ye pe (qõ I) I fynde in no lawe to mede and rewarde in goodnes/ꝑ gylte of deſertes. Iole (qõ ſhe) gylte couertro i pour lawe/myſtel merite deſerueth. Alſo Pauly of Rome was crowned/ꝑ by him the mayntenours of Pompeus were vnbuen & diſtroyed: & yet to ſome was this Paulyn cheſe of Põpeus coũſaile. This lawe in Rome hath yet his name of meſuring in mede/the bewareng of the cõſpiracy/ordayned by tho ſenatours the dethe. Julyus Ceſar is acõpted in to Catons right wiſneſſe/ for euer in trouth floriſſheth his name amonge the vnwers of reaſon. Perdicas was crowned in the herytage of Alexãder the great/ for tellyng of a prouy hate that kynge Porrus to Alexander hadde. Wherfore euery wight by reaſon of lawe after his right wyſeneſſe aptely his mede may chalenge: & ſo thou that mayntyneſt lawe of kynde/ & therfore diſeaſe haſt ſuffred in ꝑ lawe/ rewarde is worthy to be rewarded & ordayned/ & apartly thy mede might thou chalenge. Certes (qõ I) this haue I wel lerned/ & euer heuſforward I ſhal drawe me therafter in ourhed of wyt to auoyde thin lawe bothe mayntene & kepe/ & ſo hope I beſt entre in to your grace/ wel deſeruynge in to worſhip of a wight/ without nedeful copulſion/ought mede/why to be rewarded. Truly (qõ Loue) that is ſothe/ & tho by conſtitution good ſeruice in to kynde & auantage ſireth/ bitterly many men it demen to haue more deſert of mede/than good wyl nat cõpelled. Se now (qõ I) howe may men holden of thas the contrary. And what is good ſeruice: of you wol de I here this queſtion declared. I ſhal ſay the (qõ ſhe) in a ſewe wordes/ reſonable worſhynges in pleſaunce & profite of thy ſouerayne. Howe ſhulde I this proume (qõ I) Right wel (qõ ſhe) & here me now a lytel. It is hardely (qõ ſhe to vnderſtãde) that right as mater by due ouerchaungynges folowyth his paſſion & his fourme: Right ſo euery man by rightful werkynges ought to folowe the leful deſpres i his hert/ & ſe to ſeyn to what ende he deſerueth/ for many tymes he that ſoſeth nat after thedes/ but vtterly therof is vnknowen/beſalleth often many pueis to done/wherthrough er he be ware ſhamefully he is confoũded/ thende ther of nedeth to be before loked to euery deſert of ſuche foreſight i good ſeruice thre thynges ſpecially nedeth to be rulers in his workes. Firſt that he do good/ nexte ꝑ he do by electyon i his owne hert/ & the thirde that he do godly without eny ſurquedry in thoughtes. That pour werkes ſhulden be good in ſcripture or in any other actes/ authoutes many may be aleged neuerthelater/ by reaſon thus maye it be ſhewed. If your werkes be cleped ſecunde/ & moeuen in vertue of the firſte wercher/ whiche in good workes wrought you to procede/ & right ſo your werkes moeuen i to vertue of the laſte ende/ & right in the firſt worchynge were nat/ no man ſhulde in the ſtrõde werche. Right ſo but ye feled to what ende & frely their goodnes cloſed/ ye ſhuld no more reeth what ye wrought but the gynnyng gan with good/ & there ſhal it ceaſe in the laſt ende/ if it be wel conſydred. Wherfore the myddle/ if other wayes it drawe then accordant to the endes/ there ſtynteth the

courſe

courſe of good / & another maner courſe entreth / & ſo it is a ꝑte by him ſelue / & euery ꝑte be nat accordant to his al / is foule & ought to be eſchewed. wherfore euery thige ꝓ is wrouȝt and be nat good / is nat accordant to thendes of his al hole / it is foule / & ought to be withdrawe. Thus the pſons that neither don good ne harme / ſhamen foule their maſtyng: Wherfore without worſtyng of good actes in good ſeruice / may no man ben accepted. Truely the vſe that han might to do good & done it nat / ꝓ crowne of worſhip ſhal be take from hem / & with ſhame ſhul they be anulled. & ſo to make one werke accordant wᵗ his endes / euery good ſeruaunt by reaſon of conſequence muſte do good nedes. Lette it ſuffiſeth nat alone to do good / but goodly withal folowe / the thãke of goodneſſe els in nought he deſerueth: For riȝt as al paur ſtrenȝ come from the greteſt good in whom al goodneſſe is cloſed. Right ſo pᵒ entides ben directe to the ſame good. Ariſtotel determyneth that ende & good ben one / and cõuertible in vnderſtãding / and he that in wyl doth away good / & he that ſoſeth nat to thẽde ſoſeth nat to good / but he that doth good and doth nat goodly / diaweth away the direction of thende nat goodly / muſt nedes be bad. Lo badde is nothing els / but abſence or negatyfe of good / as derkeneſſe is abſence or negatyue of lyght. Than he that doth goodly / directeth thilke good in to thende of badde: So muſte thyng nat good folowe / ebe badneſſe to ſuche folke ofte folowith. Thus cõtrariaunt worꝛkers of thende that is good / ben worthy the cõtrary of thende that is good to haue. How (ꝙ I) may any good dede be done / but if goodly it helpe. Yes (qõ Loue) the deuyl dothe many good dedes / but goodly he leueth be hynde / for euery badly & in diſcreuable wyſe he worꝛketh / Wherfore the cõtrary of thende him folowith. And do he neuer ſo many good dedes / bicauſe goodly is away / his goodnes is nat reſened. Lo than tho a man do good / but he do goodly thende in goodneſſe wol nat folowe / & thus in good ſeruice both good dede & goodly done muſten ioyne togider / & that it be done with free choiſe in hert: & ele deſerueth he nat ꝓ me rite in goodnes / that wol I proue. for if thou do any thyng good by chaũce or by happe / in what thyng art thou therof worthy to be remẽded: for nothing by reaſon of that turneth in to thy playſing ne lackyng. Lo thilke thig done by hap vp thy wyl is nat cauſed / & therby ſhulde I thanke or lacke deſerue: & ſythen that ſayleth / thende which that wel ſhulde reꝛwarde / muſt nedes faile. clerkes ſayn / no man but wyllynge is bleſſed a good dede ꝓ he hath done is nat done of free choice wyllyng / without whiche blyſſedneſſe may nat folowe. Ergo neither thãke of goodneſſe ne ſeruice / that is cõtrary of the good ende / ſo than to good ꝓuice lõgeth good dede goodly don / thoꝛowe free choice I hert. Truely (qõ I) this haue I wel vnderſtande. Wel (qõ ſhe) euery thyng thus done ſufficiẽtly by lawe / that is cleped iuſtice / after reꝛwarde claym. For lawe & iuſtice was ordayned in this wiſe / ſuche deſertes in goodneſſe after quantite in doynge / by mede to reꝛwarde / & of neceſſyte of ſuche iuſtyce / ꝓ is to ſay / riȝt wyſeneſſe was free choice in deꝛuyng of wel or of puel grauted to reſonable creatures. Euery man hath free arbitremẽt to chooſe good or puel to pfoꝛme. Nowe (qõ I tho) if I by my good wyl deſerue this Margarit ple and am nat therto cõpelled / & haue free choice to do what me lyſteth: She is than holden as me thynketh to reꝛwarde thentent of my good wyl. Goddes forbode els (qõ Loue) no wiȝt meaneth otherwiſe I trowe / free wyl of good hert after mede deſerueth. Hath euery man (ꝙ I) free choice by neceſſary maner of wyl I reuerey of his doynges / that him lyſteth by goddes proper purueyance. I wolde ſe that wel declared to my ſcude vnderſtãding / for neceſſary & neceſſyte ben wordes of moꝛel entẽtion / cloſyng (as to ſaye) ſo mote it be nedes / & otherwyſe may it nat betyde. This ſhalt thou lern (qõ ſhe) ſo thou take hede in my ſpeche. If it were nat in mãnes owne lyberte of free wyl to do good or bad / but to the one teped by bonde of goddes preordynaunce: Than do he neuer ſo wel it were by nedeful cõpulcion of thilke bõde and nat by free choice / wherby nothyng he deſyreth / & do he neuer ſo puel it were nat man for to wyte / but onelych to him ꝓ ſuche thyng ordayned him to done. Wherfore he ne ought

for

for bad he punished/ ne for no good dede he re warded/ but of necessite of rightwisnesse was therfore fre choice of arbitrement put in mans proper disposition: truely if it were other wise it cõtraried goddes charite/ ꝑ badnesse & good nesse rewardeth after desert of payn or of me de. Wel thynketh this wõder (ꝙ I) for god by necessite forwote al thynges cõmyng/ and so mote it nedes be: & thilke thiges that ben don be our fre choice comen nothig of necessite but onely be wyl: How we may this stonde togy ther: and so me thynketh truely/ that fre choyce fully repugneth god des forwetyng. Trewly lady me semeth they mowe nat stande togyther.

Than gan loue nygh me nere/ & with a no ble countenance of vysage & symmes/ dressed her nigh my sytting place. Take south (ꝙ she) thy pen & redily wute these wordes/ for if god wol/ I shal hem so enforme to the/ ꝑ thy lewd nesse whiche I haue vnderstãd in that mater/ shal openly be clered/ & thy sight in ful losing therin amended. First if thou thynke that god des prescãce repugne lyberte of arbetry of ar bitrement/ it is impossible that they shulde ac corde in onherd of sothe to vnderstõding. Ye (qõ I) forsothe so I it cõcepue. Wel (qõ she) if thilke impossible were away/ the repugnan ce that semeth to be therin/ were vtterly remo ued. Shewe me the absence of that impossibi lyte (qõ I) So (qõ she I shal). Nowe I sup pose that they mowe stãde togider/ ꝑscience of god whõ soloweth necessite of thiges cõmyng and lyberte of arbitremẽt/ thorowe whiche ꝑ beleuest many thiges to be without necessite. Bothe these ꝓpocions be sothe (qõ I) & wel mowe stãde togider/ wherfore this case as pos syble I admyt. Truely (qõ she) & this case is impossible. Howe so (qõ I) For herof (ꝙ she followeth & wexeth another ipossyble. Proue me that (ꝙ I). that I shal (ꝙ she) for sothing is cõmyng without necessyte/ & god wot that to forn/ for al thig cõmyng he before wot/ and that he before wot of necessyte is cõmyng: as he before wot be the case by necessary maner than/ or els thorowe necessite is sothyng to be without necessite/ & whereto euery wight ꝑ hath good vnderstanding/ is seen these thynges to be repugnyant. Prescãce of god/ whiche that folowe th necessyte & lyberte of arbytrement/ fro whiche is remoued necessyte/ for truely it is necessary that god haue forwetyng of thig without any necessite cõmynge. Ye (qõ I) but yet remeue ye nat away fro myne vnder standyng/ the necessyte folowyng goddes be forewetyng/ as thus. God before wote me in fermer of loue to be bounden to this Mar garite ple/ & therfore by necessite thus to loue am I bounde/ & if I nat had loued/ thorowe necessyte had I ben kepte from al loue dedes. Certes (qõ Loue) bicause this mater is good & necessary to declare/ I thynke here in wel to abyde and not sykely to passe. Thou shalte not (quod she) say al onely god before wote me to be a louer or no louer/ but thus: god be fore wote me to be a louer without neces syte. And so it folowe th whether thou loue or not loue/ euery of hem is and shal be. But nowe thou seest the impossibylite of the case/ and the possibylite of thilke that thou wendest had ben impossyble/ wherfore the repugnaũce is annulled. Ye (quod I) and yet do ye not a waye the strength of necessyte whan it is said/ though necessyte it is me in loue to abyde/ or not to loue without necessyte for god before wote it. This maner of necessyte forsothe se meth to some men in to coaction/ that is to sayne/ constrayning or ells prohibycion that is defendynge/ wherfore necessyte is me to loue of wyl. I vnderstande me to be con strayned by some puny strength to the wyl of louynge/ and if no loue to be defended from the wyl of louynge/ and so thorowe necessyte me semeth to loue/ for I loue/ or ells not to loue/ if I not loue/ wherthrough neyther thẽke ne maugre in tho thynges maye I deserue.

Nowe (quod she) thou shalte wel vnder stande that ofter we sayne thynge thorowe necessyte to be that by no strength to be nye ther is coarted ne constrayned/ and throughe necessyte not to be/ that with no defendynge is remoued/ for we sayne it is thorowe ne cessyte god to be immortal nenghe deedlyche/ and it is necessyte god to be rightful/ but not

that

that any strength of violente maner cõstrayneth hym to be immortal/ or defendeth hym to be vntrughtful/ for nothig may make hym dedly or vntrughtful. Right so if I say thorow ne cessyte is ꝑ to be a louer or ells none/ onely thorow wyll/ as god before wrte/ It is nat to vnderstõde that any thyng defedeth or forbut/ the thy wyll/ whiche shal nat be/ or ells cõstrayneth it to be whiche shalbe: that same thynge forsoth god before wot/ whiche he before seeth any thyng comende of onely wyll/ ꝑ wyll neyther is cõstrayned ne defẽded thorow me any other thing. & so thorow lyberte of arbitremẽt it is do/ that is done of wyll. And trewly my good childe/ if these thynges be wel vnderstõd I wene that non inconuenyent shalt thou fynde bet wene goddes forwetyng & lyberte of arbitremẽt/ wherfore I wot wel they may stãde togider. Also farthermore/ who that vnderstãdyng of prescience propheth cõsydreth/ thorow the same wyse that any thyng be afore wyst/ is said for to be cõmyng it is pronoticed/ there is nothing to forn wist/ out thig cõmyng/ fore wetig is but of trouth oout may nat be wyst: wherfore whan I sey that god to forn wote any thyng/ thorow ne cessyte is thilke thyng to be cõmyng/ al is one if I sey/ if it shalbe/ but this necessyte neither cõstrayneth ne defedeth any thyng to be or nat to be. Therfore sothly if loue is put to be/ it is said of necessyte to be/ or ells for it is put nat to be/ it is affirmed nat to be of necessyte: nat for ꝑ necessite cõstrayneth or defendeth loue to be or nat to be. For whan I say/ if loue shal be of necessite it shal be/ here fore with necessyte. the thyng to forne put/ it is as moch to say/ as if it were thus pronoticed/ that thyng shalbe: None other thyng figurfyeth this necessyte but onely thus/ that shalbe may nat togider be & nat be. Euelych also it is soth/ loue was & is/ & shalbe/ nat of necessyte/ & nede is to haue be al that was/ & nedeful is to be al that is/ & cõmyng to al that shalbe: & it is nat the same to saye/ loue to be passed/ and loue passed to be passed/ or loue present to be present/ and loue to be present/ or ells loue to be commynge/ and loue commynge to be cõmyng: Diuersite in settyng of wordes/ maketh diuersite in vnderstãdynge/ altho in the same sentẽce they accorden of sygnifieation/ right as it is nat al one loue to be swete/ & loue to be swete: for moch loue is better & sorouful er herted ben eased/ & yet it gladeth thilke sorouful hert on suche loue to thynke. Forsothe (qõ I) outher while I haue had moded blysse in hert of loue/ ꝑ stoutnesse hath me sorily anoyed: & certes lady/ for I se my selfe thus knit with this Margarite perle as by bonde of pour scrupee/ & of no lyberte of wyll/ my hert wyl nowe nat accorde this seruyce to loue. I can demyn in my selfe non other wise/ but thorow ne cessite am I cõstrayned in this seruice to abyde. But alas than/ if I thorow ne nedeful cõpulsioun maugre me be with holde/ lytel thãke for al my great trauel haue I than deserued. Nowe (qõ this lady) I saye as I sayde: We lyketh this mater to declare at the full/ & why: for many men haue had diuers fantasyes & reasons/ both on one syde therof & in the other. Of whiche rist soue I trowe if thou wolt vnderstõde/ thou shalte con yeue the sentẽce/ to the ꝑte more probable by reason/ & in soth knowing/ by that I haue of this mater maked an ende. Certes (qõ I) of these thynges longe haue I had great lufte to be lerned/ for yet I wene goddes wyll & his prefaẽce accordeth with my seruice/ in louynge of this precious Margarite perle. After whom euer in my hert with thurstyng desire weete I do brenne: vnwastyng I sãgour & sade/ and the day of my deftemy in dethe or in ioye I vnbyde/ but yet in thende I am comforted be my supposaile in blysse/ & in ioye to determyne after my desyres. That thyng (qõ Loue) hasteth ly to ꝑ neigh/ god graut of his grace & mercy/ and this shalbe my prayer tyl thou be lysende in herte at thyne owne wyll. But nowe to ensoume the in this mater (qõ this lady) thou woste where I leste/ that was loue to be swete and loue swete to be swete/ is nat al one for to say: for a tree is nat al way by necessite white fortyme er it were white/ it myght haue be nat white: & after tyme it is white/ it maye be nat white: But a whyte tree euermore nedeful is to be white: for neither to forn ne after it was white/ myght it be togider white & nat white. Also loue by necessyte is nat present as nowe

in the

in the/ for er it were present it myght haue be that it shulde no we nat haue be/ & yet it maye be that it shal nat be present: but thy loue present whiche to her Margarite the hath bounde/ nedeful is to be present. Therwy some doyng of action nat by necessyte is cõmynge ferre to forn it be/it may be that it shal nat be cõmynge: thyng forsoth cõming nedeful is to be cõming/ for it may nat be that cõming shal nat be cõmyng. & right as I haue sayd of present and of future tymes/the same sentẽce in sothnesse is of the preterit/ ꝑ is to say tyme passed for thyng passed must nedes be passed/ & er it were it might haue nat be/ wherfore it shulde nat haue passed. Right so whan loue cõming is said of loue that is to come/ nedeful is to be that is said/for thing cõmyng neuer is nat cõmynge/ & so ofte the same thynge we sayn of the same/ as whan we sayne euery man is a man/ or euery louer is a louer/ so muste it be nedes/ in no waye may he be man & no man togider. And if it be nat by necessite/that is to say/nedeful al thyng cõmyng to be cõmyng/ than somthyng cõmyng is nat cõmynge/and that is impossible/right as these termes nedeful/necessite/ & necessary betoken and signify thyng nedes to be/ & it may nat otherwise be. Right these termes impossible signifieth/ that thyng is nat & by no way may it be/ than thorow pert necessite/al thyng cõmyng is commyng/ but that is by necessite/ folowth with nothyng to be cõstrayned. so whan that commyng is said of thynge/ nat alway thyng thorow necessite is/altho it be cõmyng. For if I say to morowe loue is cõmyng i this Margarit hert/ nat therfore thorow necessite shal the alle loue be/ yet it may be that it shal nat be/ altho it were cõmyng. Neuerthelater/ sõtyme it is soth that somthyng be of necessite/ that is sayd to come: as if I say to morowe by commynge the risynge of the sonne. If therfore with necessite I pronounce cõmyng of thyng to come/in this manir loue to mouue cõmynge in thyne Margarite to the warde by necessite is cõmynge/ or els the risyng of the sonne to mouue cõmynge/ through necessite is commynge. Loue sothely/ whiche may nat be of necessyte alone folowynge/ thorow necessyte cõmyng it is made certayne. For futur of futur is said/that is to sayn cõmyng of cõmynge is said: as if to morowe we cõmyng is thorow necessite cõmynge it is. Arisyng of the sonne thorow we two necessites in cõmyng/ it is to vnderstãde/that one is to forgoing necessite/ whiche maketh thyng to be/ therfore it shalbe/ for nedeful is that it be. Another is folowyng necessite/ whiche nothyng cõstrayneth to be/ and so by necessyte it is to come/ why: for it is to come. Now we than/ whan we sayn/ that god before wot thyng cõmyng nedeful is to be cõmyng/ yet therfore make we nat in certayne/ euermore thynge to be thorow we necessite commynge. Sothly thyng cõmyng maye nat be nat cõmyng by no way/for it is the same sentence of vnderstãdyng: as if we say thus. If god before wot any thyng/ nedeful is that to be cõmyng. But yet therfore folowth nat ꝑ prescience of god/ thyng thorow we necessite to be cõmyng: for al tho god to forn wote al thinges cõmyng/ yet nat therfore he before wot euery thyng cõmyng thorow we necessite. Yoe thinges he before wot cõmyng of fre wyl out of resonable creature. Certes (qõ I) these termes/ nede & necessite/ haue a queynt maner of vnderstãdyng/they wolden dulle many mennes wittes. Therfore (qõ she) I wol hem openly declare/ & more clerely than I haue to forn er I departe hense.

Here of this mater (qõ she) thou shalte vnderstãde/that right as it is nat nedeful god to wyne that he wyl/ no more in many thynges is nat nedeful a man to wyne that he wol. And euer right as nedeful is to be what that god wol/ right so to be it is nedeful that man wol in tho thynges/ whiche that god hath put in to mannes subiection of wyllynge: as if a mã wol loue/that he loue: & if he ne wol loue/ that he loue nat/ & of suche other thynges in mannes disposition. For why/ no we than that god wol may nat be/ whan he wol the wyl of man thorow we no necessyte to be cõstrayned or els defended for to wyne/ & he wol therfore to folowe the wyl/ than is it nedeful wyl of man to be fre/ & also to be that he wol. In this maner it is soth/ that thorow we necessite is mannes werke in louyng/ that he wel do altho he wol it nat

it not with necessyte. (Quod I thā) how we stande it in loue of thilke wyl/ sythen men louen lastyng of fre chopet in ferie. Wherfore if it be thāne we necessyte/ I praye you lady of an answere thes question to assoyle. I wol (qð she) answere the blyuely: Right as men wyl not thāne we necessyte/ right so is not loue of wyl thāne we necessyte/ ne thāne we necessyte wrought thilke same wyl: for if he wolde it not with good wyl/ it shulde not haue ben wrought/ although that he dothe it is nedeful to be done. But if a man do synne it is nothyng als but to wyl/ that he shulde not: right so synne of wyl is not to be mauer necessary done/ no more than wyl is necessarye. Neuer the later thes is sothe/ if a man wol synne/ it is necessarye him so synne/ but though thilke necessyte nothyng is constrayned ne defended in the wyl/ right so thilke thynge that fre wyl wol and maye/ and not may/ not wylne/ and nedeful is that to wylne he maye not wylne/ But thilke to wylne nedeful is/ for impossyble to him it is one thyng/ and the same to wylne he may not wylne/ but thilke to wylne nedeful is: for impossyble to him it is one thyng/ and the same to wylne and not to wylne. The werke forsothe of wyl/ to whome it is pend that it be that he hath in wyl/ and that he wol not/ Solitarie of spontanye it is/ for by spontanye wyl it is do/ that is to saye with good wyl/ not constrayned: than by wyl not constrayned/ it is constrayned to be/ and that is it may not togyther be. If this necessyte maketh syerte of wyl/ whiche that afore the werken they might haue ben eschewed & shonned: God than/ whiche þ knoweth al truthe/ and not synge but truthe/ al these thynges as they arne spontanye or necessarie sygh/ and as he seeth so they ben: and so with these thynges wel considered it is open at the ful/ that without al maner repugnaunce/ god before wote al maner thynges ben done by fre wyl/ whiche afore the werken might haue ben never they shulde be/ and yet ben they thāne we a maner necessyte from fre wyl descendeth.

Herby maye (quod she) lightly ben knowe that not al thinges to be is of necessyte/ though god haue seen in his prescience/ for somthynges to be is of ouertes of wyl: and to make the to haue ful vnderstonding of godder before wetyng/ here me (quod she) what I shal say. Blythly lady (quod I) me lyst thin mater entirely to vnderstande. Thou shalte (qð she) vnderstande/ that in heuen is godder kynge/ although he be ouer al by power/ yet there is abundance of dewyne persone/ in whiche heuen is euerlastynge presence/ withouten any mouable tyme there/ sole haue I not sayd to forn this/ as tyme hurteth/ right so ayenward tyme healeth and rewardeth: and a tree oft sayed/ is holde more in deyntie whan it frute forthe bringeth. A marchaunt that forbones lesynge in the see no more to auenture thynketh/ he shal neuer with auenture come to ryches: so ofte must men on the obe smyte/ tyl the happy dent haue entred/ whiche with the obes owne swape maketh it to come al at ones. So ofte fallieth the lethy water on the harde rocke/ tyl it haue thāne we persed it. The euen draught of the wyre drawer/ maketh the wyre to ben euen and supple werchynge/ and if he stynted in his draught/ the wyre breaketh a sonder. Euery tre wel springeth/ whan it is wel grouñded and not ofte remoued. What shal this frute be (qð I) now it gynneth ryse: Grace (quod she) in parfyte ioy to endure/ and therwith thou begon. Grace (quod I) me thynketh I shulde haue a rewarde for my longe trauayle: I shal tel the (quod she) retribucion of thy good wylles to haue of thy Margaryte perle/ it beareth not the name of mede/ but onely of good grace/ and that cometh not of thy deserte/ but of thy Margarytes goodnesse/ and vertue alone. (Quod I) shulde al my longe trauayle haue no rewarde but thāne we grace/ and sometyme pour seluen sayd/ right wysnesse euenlyche rewardeth to quyte one benefyte for another. That is sothe (quod Loue) euer as I sayde/ as to him that dothe good/ whiche to done he were neyther holden ne yet constrayned. That is sothe (quod I). Lere wly (quod she) al that ever thou doest to thyne Margaryte perle/ of wyl/ of loue/ and of reson thou owest to done

it/ yet is nothyng els but yeldyng of thy dette in quitynge of thy grace/ whiche she the lent whan ye first mette. I wene (quod I) right lytle grace to me she delyuered. Certes it was harde grace/ it hath nyghe me astrangled. That it was good grace I wot wel thou wyst it graunt er thou departe hence. If any man yeue to another wight to whom that he ought not/ and whiche that of him selfe nothynge maye haue/ a garnement or a cote/ though he weare the cote or els thilke clothyng/ it is not to put to him that was naked the cause of his clothynge/ but onely to him that was yeuer of the garnement. Wherfore I saye/ thou that were naked of loue/ and of thy selfe non haue mightest/ it is not to put to thyne owne persone/ sythen thy loue came thorowe thy Margarytte perle. Ergo she was yeuer of the loue although thou it vse/ and there lent she the grace thy seruyce to begynne. She is worthy the thanke of this grace/ for she was the yeuer. Al the thoughtes/ besy doynges/ and plesaunce in thy might and in thy wordes that thou canste deuyse/ ben but right lytel in quitynge of thy dette: had she not ben/ suche thing hadde not ben studyed. So al these maters rydely drawen homewarde to this Margarytte perle/ for from thence were they borowed/ al is holy her to wyte the loue that thou hauest: and thus quytest thou thy dette/ in that thou stedfastly seruest. And kepe wel that loue I the rede/ that of her thou hast borowed/ and vsest in her seruyce thy dette to quite/ and than arte thou able right fone to haue grace/ wherfore after mede in none halue maist thou lose. Thus thy grnnyng and endyng is but grace alone/ and in thy good deseruynge thy dette thou aquitest: without grace is nothyng worthe what so euer thou werthe. Thanke thy Margarytt of her great grace that hytherto the hath gyded/ and praye her of contynuaunce forthe in thy werkes hereafter/ and that for no mishappe thy grace ouerth wartly tourne. Grace/ glorie/ and ioye/ is comyng thorowe good folkes desertes/ and by gryping of grace therin shulleth ende. And what is more glorie or more ioye than wysdome and loue in parfyte charite/ whiche god hath graunted to al tho that wel canne deserue. And with that thes lady al at ones sterte in to myn hert: here wol I enbyde (quod she) for euer/ and neuer wol I goy hence/ and I wol kepe the from medlynge while me lyste here enbyde: thyne entremetynge maners in to stedfastnesse shulleth be chaunged.

SOberlyche tho thewe I vp myn eyen/ and hugely tho was I astonyed of this godayne aduenture/ and sayne wolde I haue serued howe vertues shulden ben knowen/ in whiche thynges I hope to god here after she shal me enfourmen/ and namely sythen her restynge place is nowe so nyghe at my wyl: and anon al these thynges that this lady sayd/ I remembred me vp my self/ and reuolued the lynes of myne vnderstondynge wyttes. Tho founde I fully al these maters parfytely there written/ howe myself rule by fayned loue bothe realmes and cytes hath gouerned a great throwe. Howe lightly me might the fautes espye/ howe rules in loue shulde ben vsed/ howe somtyme with fayned loue some I was begyled/ howe I shulde loue hauenowe/ and howe I shal in loue with my seruyce procede. Also furthermore I founde of perdurable letters wonderly there grauen/ these maters whiche I shal nempne. Certes none age ne other thynge in erthe maye the lest syllable of this in no poynte deface/ but clerely as the sonne in myne vnderstondynge some they shyned. This maye neuer out of my mynde/ howe I maye not my loue kepe/ but thorowe wyllynge in herte: Wylne to loue maye I not/ but I louynge haue. Loue haue I none but thorowe grace of this Margarite perle. It is no maner doute/ that wyl wol not loue but for it is louynge/ as wyl wol not right wully/ but for it is right wul it selue. Also wyl is not louynge for he wol loue/ but he wol loue for he is louynge: it is al one to wyl to be louynge/ and louynges in possession to haue. Right so wyl wol not loue/ for of loue hath he no partie/ & yet I denye not louynge wyl wylne more loue to haue/ whiche that he hath not whan he wolde more than he hath/

but

but I saye he maye no loue wysse/ if he no loue haue/ throughe which thilke loue he shulde wysse: but to haue this louyng wyl may no man of him selfe/ but onely through grace to some goyng: Right so maye no man it kepe/ but by grace solo wynge. Consyder nowe euery man aright/ and let sene if ꝑ any wight of him selfe nowe this louyng wel get/ and he therof first nothynge haue: for if it shulde of him selfe spring/ eyther it muste be wyllyng or not wyllyng. Wyllyng by him selfe may he it not haue/ sythen him faylyth the mater that shulde it sothe bring/ the mater him fayleth: Whyle he maye therof haue no knowyng/ tyl whan grace put it in his herte. Thus wyllyng by him selfe may he it not haue/ and not wyllyng may he it not haue. Parde euery consept of euery reasonable creature otherwyse wyl not graunt: Wyl in affyrmatife with not wyllyng by no way nowe accorde. And although this louyng wol come in myn hert by frenesse of arbytrement/ as in this booke fully is shewed/ yet owe I not therfore as moche also we my frewyl/ as grace of that Margarete to me leaned/ for neyther might I without grace to soun goyng/ and afterwarde solo wyng/ thilke grace get me kepe/ and lese shal I it neuer but if frewyl it make/ as in wyllynge otherwyse than grace hath me graunted. For right as whan any person taketh wyllyng to be sobre/ and throweth ꝑ away/ wilyng to be dronke/ or els taketh wyl of drinkyng out of mesure: whiche thyng euery as it is done/ maketh thorowe his owne gylte by frewyl that leseth his grace. In whiche thing therfore vpon the nobley of grace I mote trusten/ ꝛ my besy cure set thilke grace to kepe/ that my frewyl otherwyse than by reason it shulde werche/ cause not my grace to voyde: for thus must I bothe lobe to frewyl and to grace. For right as naturel vsage in engenoring of children maye not ben without father/ ne also but with the mother/ for neyther father ne mother in begetting maye it lacke: right so grace and frewyl accorden/ and without hem bothe maye not louynge wyl in no partie ben getten. But yet is not frewyl in gettynge of that thyng so moche thilke worthy as is grace/ ne in the kepynge therof/ so moche thanke deserueth/ and yet in gettynge and kepyng bothe done they accorde. Trewly ofte tyme grace frewyl hetyth in forboynge of contrarye thinges/ that to wyllynge loue not accorden/ and strengthe wyl aduersytees to withstande/ wherfore al together to grace owen to ben accepted/ that my wullyng deserueth: Frewyl to louyng in this wyse is accorded. Remembre me wel howe al this booke (who so hede taketh) consydereth al thynges to werthynges of manhynde euenly accordeth/ as in turnyng of this worde loue in to trouthe/ or els rightwysnesse/ whether that it kepe. For what thyng that faileth to man in helpyng of free arbytrement/ thilke rightwysnesse to take or els to kepe/ thorowe whiche a man shal be saued/ of whiche thyng al this booke mention hath maked/ in euery poynte therof grace owen to be thanked.

Wherfore I saye/ euery wight haunge this rightwysnesse rightful is/ and yet therfore I sene not in my conscience/ that to al rightful is behoten the blysse euerlastynge/ but to hem that ben rightful without any vnrightfulnesse. Some may after some degree maye rightfully ben accompted: as chaste men in spusyng/ and yet ben they langlers and ful of enuy pressed: to hem shal this blysse neuer ben delyuered. For right as very blysse is without al maner nede/ right so to no man shal it be yeuen but to the rightful/ voyde from al maner vnrightfulnesse founde/ so no man to her blysse shal ben folowed/ but he be rightful/ and with vnrightfulnesse not bounde/ and in that degree fully be knowe. This rightfulnesse in as moche as in him selfe is/ of none yuel is it cause/ and of al maner goodnesse frewly it is mother. This helpeth the spyrit to withstande the leude lustes of flesshly lykynge: This strengtheth and mayntayneth the lawe of kynde/ and if that otherwhyle me weneth harme of this precious thyng to folowe/ therthorough is nothynge the cause/ of somwhat els cometh it aboute who so taketh hede. By rightfulnesse forsothe were many holy sayntes good sauour I swetenesse to god almyghty but that to some selden they were sauour of dethe in to deedly ende/ that come not of the

sayntes rightwysnesse/ but of other wycked mennes badnesse hath proceded. Trewly the ille wyl/ whiche that the lady of loue me lerned/affectyon of wyl to nempne/ whiche is ny wyllyng of profytable thynges/ yuel is it not/ but whan to flesshly lustes it cõsenteth/ayenst reason of soule: But that this thynge more clerely be vnderstãd/it is for to vnowe/ where and howe thylke wyl is so vycious and so redye/ yuel dedes to performe. Grace at the gynnynge/ ordeyned thilke wyl ny goodnesse euer to haue endured/ and neuer to badnesse haue assented: Why shulde not byeue/ that god thilke wyl maked to be vycious. Our firste father as Adam and Eue/ for vycious appetytes and vycious wyl to suche appetytes consentynge/ ben not on thynge ny vnde/ other thyng is done for the other. And howe this wyl fyrst ny to may first assented Iholde it profytable to shewe: but if the first condycion of reasonable creature wol be confydred and apertly loked/ lightly the cause of suche wyl may ben shewed. Intencion of god was that rightfully and blyssed shulde reasonable nature ben maked/ hym selfe for to kepe/ but neyther blyssful ne rightful might it not be/ withouten wyl ny them bothe. Wyl of rightfulnesse is thilke same rightfulnesse/ as here to forne is shewed: but wyl of blysse is not thilke blysse/ for euery man hath not thilke blysse/ ny whom the wyl therof is abydynge. In this blysse after euery vnderstandynge is suffysaunce of conenable comodytees without any maner nede/ whether it be blysse of aungels or els thilke/that grace first ny paradise suffred Adam to haue. For al though angels blysse be more than Adams was ny paradyse/ yet maye it not be denyded/that Adam ny paradyse ne had suffysaunce of blysse: for eyght as great herte is without al maner of colodnesse/ and yet maye another herte more heate haue/ right so nothynge defended Adam ny paradyse to ben blessed/ without al maner nede. Al thoughe aungels blysse be moche more/ forsothe it foloweth not lasse than a nother to haue therfore hym nedeth/ but for to wante a thynge whiche that behoueth to ben had/ that maye nede ben cleped/ and that was not ny Adam at the first gynnyng. God and the Margarye weten what I meane. Forsothe where as is nede/ there is wretchydnesse/ good without cause to fongoyng made not reasonable creature wretched/ for hym to vnderstande and loue had he firste maked. God made therfore man blyssed without al maner indygence/ togyther and at ones to the reasonable creature blysse/ and wyl of blyssfulnesse/ and wyl of rightfulnesse/ whiche is rightfulnesse it selue/and lyberte of arbytrement/that is fre wyl/ with whiche thilke right fulnesse may he kepe and lese. So and ny that wyse ordayned thylke two/ that wyl whiche that instrument is cleaped/ as here to forne mencion is maked/ shulde vse thilke rightfulnesse/by teachyng of his soule to good maner of gouernaunce/ ny thought and ny wordes/ and that it shulde vse the blysse ny obedyent maner/ withouten any incõmodyte. Blysse forsothe ny to mannes profyte/and rightwysnesse ny to his worshyp god delyuered at ones: but rightfulnesse so was peuey ỹ man might it lese/ whiche if he not lost had not/but continuelly haue it kepte/he shulde haue deserued the auaunterment ny to the selo wshyppe of angels/ny whiche thyng if he that lost/neuer by hym selfe forwarde shulde he it mowe ayenwarde recouer: and as wel the blysse that he was ny/as aungels blysse that to hym wardes was comyng/shulde be nome at ones/ and he depuued of them bothe. And thus fyl man vnto lybeneesse of vnreasonable bestes/and with hem to corruption and vnlusty apetytes was he vnder thro wey/but yet wyl of blysse dwelleth/that by indygence of goodes whiche that he lost through great wretchydnesse/by right shulde he ben punusshed. And thus for he wepued rightfulnesse/ lost hath he his blysse: but sayle of his desyre ny his owne comodyte may he not/and were comodytes to his reasonable nature whiche he hath lost may he not haue. To false lustes/whiche ben bestyal appetytes he is turned: folye of vnconnyng hath hym begyled/ny wenyng ỹ thilke ben the comodytes that owen to ben desyred. This affection of wyl by lyberte of arbitrement is enduced to wylne thus thing that he shulde not/and so is

wyl

wyl not maked yuel but vnrighteful/by abstere of rightfulnesse/ whiche thing by reason euer shulde he done. And frenesse of arbytrement may he not wyne/ whan he it not requeth/ for wythe he it had/ thilke halpe it not to kepe: so that without grace may it not ben recouered. Wyl of cõmodyte/ in as moche as vnrighteful it is maked/ by wyllynge of yuel lustes/ wylsyng of goodnesse may he not wyne: for wyl of instrument to affection of wyl is thralled/ sythen that other thyng may it not wyne/ for wyl of instrument to affection desyreth/ & yet ben bothe they wyl cleped: for that instrument wol/ through affection it wyneth/ & affection desyreth thilke thyng wherto instrument him ledeth. And so frewyl to vnlusty affection sul seruaunt is maked/ for vnrightefulnesse maye he not refreine/ & without righteulnesse sul fredome may it neuer haue. For syndry lybertie of arbytrement without it/ veyne and ydel is forsothe. Wherfore yet I say/ as often haue I sayd the same/ whan instrument of wyl lofte hath righteulnesse/ in no maner but by grace may he ayen retourne righteulnesse to wyne. For sythen nothyng but righteulnesse alone shulde he wyne/ what þ euer he wyneth without righteulnesse/ vnrighteully he it wyneth. These than vnrighteful appetytes & vnlusty lustes which the syres desyreth/ in as mokel as they ben in vnde/ ben they not bad/ but they ben vnrighteful and badde/ for they ben in resonable creature/ where as they beyng in no wape shulde ben suffred. In vnreasonable beestes neyther ben they yuel ne vnrighteful/ for there is their vnde beyng.

BNo wen may it wel ben nowe/ of these thynges toforne declared/ þ man hath not alway thilke rightfulnesse/ which by dute of right euermore hauen he shulde/ and by no wap by him selfe may he it get ne kepe/ & after he it hath if he it lese/ recouer shal he it neuer/ without especial grace: Wherfore the comune sentence of the people in opinyon/ that euery thynge after destenye is ruled/ falsse and wicked is to beleue: For thoughe predestynacion be as wel of good as of badde/ sythen that it is sayde god godnesse made/ whiche he neuer ne wrought/ but for he suffreth hem to be maked/ as that he hardeth whan he naught misfayche/ or sedde hy to temptacion whan he not despyereth/ wherfore it is none inconuenyent if in that maner be sayd/ god toforne haue destenyed bothe badde/ and her badde werkes/ whan hem ne their yuel deden neyther amendeth/ ne therto hem grace leueth. But specyallyche predestynacion of goodnesse alone/ is sayde by these great clerkes/ for in hym god dothe that they ben/ and that in goodnesse they werchen. But the negatyse herof in badnesse is holden/ as the lady of loue hath me lerned/ who so aright in this booke loketh. And vterly it is to weten/ that predestynacion properly god may not ben demed/ no more than beforne wetyng. For in the chapitre of goddes beforne wetyng/ as Loue me reherfed/ al these maters apertely maye ben founden. Al thynges to god ben nowe togyther and in presence durynge. Trewly presence and predestynacion in nothynge disacordeth/ wherfore as I was lerned howe goddes beforewetyng and free choyce of wyl mowe stonden togyther/ me thynketh the same reason me leadeth/ that destenye and frewyl accorden/ so that neyther of hem bothe to other in nothing contrarieth. And reasonably che may it not ben demed/ as often as any thyng falleth frewyl werchyng/ as if a man another man wrongfully anoyeth/ wherfore he him sleeth/ that it be confirmed to that ende/ as mokel folke cryeth and sayth: Lo/ as it was destenyed of god toforne vnowyso it is thorowe necessyte fal/ and other wyse might it not betyde. Trewly neyther he that the wronge wrought/ ne he that him selfe venged/ none of thilke thinges thorowe necessyte wrought: for if that with frewyl there had it not wylled/ neyther had wrought that he persourmed: and so vterly grace that frewyl in goodnesse bungeth and kepeth/ and fro badnesse it tourneth/ in al thynge mosie thanke deserueth. This grace maketh sentence in vertue to abyde/ wherfore in body and in soule in ful plentie of comynge after their good deseruyng in the euerlastynge ioy/ after the day of dome shul they endelesse dwel/ and they shul ben lerned in that kyngdome with

so mosel affecte of loue and of grace/ that the leste tope shal of the greatest in glorie reioyce and ben gladded/ as if he the same tope had. What wonder syth god is ꝑ greatest loue/ and the ne ought to lobe thynges with resonnyng to pue/ and so is instrumet of wyl/ wyl: and yet barpeth he from efferte ꝛ vsing bothe. Affection of wyl also for wyl is cleped/ but it barpeth from instrument in this maner wise/ by that name/ lyche whan it cometh in to mynde anon right it is in wyllynge despred/ and the negatyse therof with wyllyng nyl not acorde: this is closed in herte/ thoughe vsage and instrument slepe. This slepeth whan instrumēt and vs waken: and of suche maner affection trewly some man hath more and some man lesse. Certes trewe louers wenen euer therof to lytel to haue. False louers in lytel wenen haue right mosel: so instrument of wyl in false and trewe bothe euen lyche is proporcioned/ but affection is more in some place than in some/ bycause of the goodnesse ꝑ folaweth/ and that I thynke hereafter to declare. Use of this instrumēt is wyl/ but it taketh his name whan wylned thyng is in doyng. but vtterly grace to catche in thy blysse/ despred to ben rewarded/ Thou muste haue thain affection of wyl at the ful/ and vse whan his tyme asketh wyselp to ben governed. Sothly my discyple without feruent affection of wil may no man ben saued: this affection of good scrupee in good loue/ may not ben grounded/ without feruent despre to the thyng in wyl conepted. But he that neuer retcheth to haue or not to haue/ affection of wyl in that hath no restyng place. Why: for whan thing cometh to mynde and it be not taken in hede to comyn or not come/ therfore in that place affection sayleth: and for thilke affection is so lytel/ thorow whi che in goodnesse che shulde come to his grace/ the lytelnesse wyl it not suffre to anayle by no way in to his helpen: Certes grace and reason thilke affection folaweth. This affection with reason knytte/ dureth in euerych trewe herte/ and euermore is encreasyng/ no ferdnesse/ no strength maye it remoue whyle truthe in herte abydeth. Sothly whan falsheed gynneth entre/ truthe draweth away/ grace/ and ioy both: but than thilke falsheed that trouth hath thus boyded/ hath vnknyt the bonde of vnderstandyng reason/ byt wene wyl and the herte. And who so that borde vndoche/ and vnknytteth wyl to be in other purpose than to the first acorde/ knytteth him with contrarye of reason/ and that is vnreason. Lo/ than wyl and vnreson bringeth a man from the blisse of grace/ which thyng of pure synde/ euery man ought to shonne ꝛ to eschewe/ and to the knot of wyl and reason conspume. Ye thynketh (qꝺ she) by thy studyet lokes/ thou wenest in these wordes me to cōtrarien/ from other sayenges here tofome in other place/ as whan thou were sōtyme in affection of wyl/ to thinges that nowe han brought the in disease/ wherche I haue the counsayled to voyde/ and thyn herte discouert/ and there I made thy wyl to ben chaunged/ whiche now thou wenest I argue to withsete and to bepe. Shortly I say ꝑ reuers in these wordes may not ben soude: for though dronkenesse be forboden/ men shul not alway ben drunkelesse. I trowe right for thou thy wyl out of reason shulde not tourne/ thy wyl in one reason shulde not vnbyde/ I say thy wyl in thy first purpose with vnreason was closed: Confitrewe forthe of the remenante what the good lyketh. Certes that wyl ꝛ reson shulde be knyt togyder was fre wyl of reason/ after tyme thyne herte is assentaunt to them bothe/ thou might not chaunge/ but if thou from rule of reason bary/ in whiche variaunce to come to thilke blysse desred/ contrariously thou wercheste: and nothyng may knowe wyl ꝛ reason but loue alone. Than if thou voide loue/ than weneste the bonde that knytteth/ and so nedes or elo right lightly/ that other gone a sondre/ wherfore thou seest apertly that loue holdeth this knot/ and amayfretth hem to be bounde. These thinges/ as a ringe in cyrcuit of writhe ben knyt in thy soule without departyng. A let be/ let be (qꝺ I) it nedeth not of this no rehersayle to make/ my soule is yet in parfyte blysse/ in thynkyng of that knotte.

O we trewly lady I haue my grounde wel vnderstonde/ but what thynge is thilke spure that in to a tree shulde weye: ex-

poune

powre me that thing/ what ye therof meane. That shal I (qõ she) wirship/ and take good hede to the wordes I the rede. Continuaunce in thy good scripte/ by longe processe of tyme in ful hope abyding/ without any chaunge to wryne in thyne herte: thee is the spire/ whiche if it be wel kept and gouerned/ shal so hugely springe/ tyl the fruite of grace is plentuously out sprongen: for al thoughe thy wyl be good/ yet may not therfore thus blysse despred hastely on the desceden/ it must abyde his seasonable tyme. & so by presse of growyng/ with thy good trauayle/ it shal in to more & more wexe/ tyl it be founde so mighty/ that wyndes of yuel speche/ ne scornes of enuy/ make nat the trauayle ouerthrowe/ ne frostes of mystrust/ ne hayles of ielousy right sycel myght haue in harmynge of suche springes. Euery yonge setlyng lightly with smale stormes is apayred/ but whan it is woxen sondele in gretnesse/ than han great blastes & wethers but lytel might/ any desauantage to them for to werche. Thyne owne souerayne lady (qõ I) and welth of myne hert/ and it were lyeng vnto your noble grace/ therthrough nat to be displeased/ I suppose ye erren/ nowe ye maben ielousy enuy/ & dystourbour to hem that ben your seruauntes. I haue lerned ofte to some this tyme/ that in euery louers hert/ great plente of ielousies greues ben sowe/ wherfore me thynketh ye ne ought in no maner accompte/ thilke thynge among these other welked wynes and venemous serpentes/ as enuy/ mystrust/ & yuel speche. O sole (qõ she) mystrust with foly wil yuel wil medled/ engendreth that welked padde. Truely if they were distroyed ielousy vndone were for euer/ & yet some maner of ielousy I wot wel is euer redy in al the hertes of my trewe seruauntes/ as thus: to be ielous ouer hi selfe/ lest he be cause of his owne disease. This ielousy in ful thought euer shulde be kept for feruentesse to lese his loue by mysbeyng/ thorowe his owne doyng in leudnesse/ or els thus: Lest she that thou seruest so seruently is beset there her better lyketh/ that of al thy good seruice she compteth nat a cresse. These ielousies in herte for acceptable qualytees ben demed: these oughten euery trewe louer by kyndely euermore haue in his mynde/ tyl fully the grace & blysse of my seruice be on hym discended at wyl. & he that thay ielousy eschetheth/ or els by meuyng of his owne folyl/ the wylfulnesse mystrustety/ truely with santa/ of venyme/ he is soule begyled. Yuel wyl hath grounded thilke mater of sorowe in his leudе soule/ & yet nat for thay to euery wight shulde me nat trust/ ne euery wight sulip my/ beleue/ the meane of these thynges owen to be vsed. Sothly withouten cause/ ful euydence/ mistrust in ielousy shulde nat be wened in no wyse person cõmenly/ suche leude wickednesse shulde me nat synde. He that is wise & with yuel wel nat be aqueted/ can abyde wel his tyme/ tyl grace & blisse of his seruice folowyng/ haue hi so mokel eased/ as his auidynge to sorowhanoe hath hi diseased. Certes lady (qõ I tho) of no thyng me wodreth/ sythen thilke blysse so precious is & syndry good/ & wel is & worthy in synde/ whan it is medled with loue & reasonl as ye to sory haue declared. Why/ anon as hye one is sprong/ why springeth nat the tother: & anone as the one cometh/ why receyueth nat the other: For euery thynge that is out of his syndly place/ by ful appetite/ euer cometh thider warde syndely to drawe/ & his syndly beyng therto hym costrayneth. & the slidy stede of this blysse/ is in suche wyl medled to vnbyde/ & nedes in that it shulde haue his syndly beyng. Wherfore me thinketh anon as that wyl to be shewed & sydde hym profreth/ thilke blysse shulde hi hye thus wyl to receyue/ or els synde of goodnesse worchen nat in hé as they shulde. Lo/ be the sonne neuer so ferre/ euer it hath his synde werching in erther: great wexit on hye onlofte caried/ stynteth neuer tyl it cóe to this resting place. Waters to the see warde euer ben they drawing/ thig that is lyght vpith sy wyl nat synke/ but euer ascendeth & vp ward draweth. Thus synde I euery thyng his syndly course/ & his beynge place sheweth: Wherfore be glde on this good wil/ anon as it were sprongen/ this blysse shulde theron discende/ her synde wolde they dwelleden togider/ & so haue ye sayde your selfe. Certes (qõ she) thyne hert sytteth wõder sore this blysse for to haue/ thyne hert is sore agreued ỳ it tarieth so lõge/

and

and if thou durſteſt/as me thynketh by thyne
wordes/ this blyſſe woldeſt thou blame. But
yet I ſaye/ thilke blyſſe is endly good/ and
his endeley place in that wyl to vnbyde. Ne-
uer the later/ their cõmyng togider after ẏn-
des ordynaunce nat ſodaynly maye betyde/ it
muſte abyde tyme/as ẏnde yeueth him leaue
for if a man/ as this wyl medled gonne hym
ſhewe/ and thilke blyſſe in haſte folowed/ ſo
lyghtly cõmynge ſhulde lyghtly cauſe gomg/
longe tyme of thurſtyng/ cauſeth dunne to be
the more delycious whan it is ataſted. Howe
is it (quod I than) that ſo many blyſſes ſe I
al daye at myne eye/ in the ſirſte moment of a
lyght with ſuche wyl accorde. ye/ and yet o-
ther whyle with wyl aſſenteth/ ſynguleely by
him ſelfe there reaſon ſayleth/ traueyle was
none/ ſeruyce had no tyme. This is a queynt
manet thynge/ howe ſuche doynge cometh a-
boute. O (quod ſhe) that is thus/ the erthe
endeely after ſeaſons and tymes of the yere/
bringeth forthe innumerable herbes and trees
bothe profytable and other/ but ſuche as men
mught leaue/ though they were nought in no-
riſſhynge to mannes ẏnde ſeruen/ or elſe ſu-
che as tourney ſoone vnto mẽnes confuſyon
in caſe that therof they ataſte/ comen fo.the
out of the erthe by their owne ẏnde/ withou-
ten any mannes cure or any buſyneſſe in tra
ueyle: and the ylke herbes that to menes lyue
lode neceſſarily ſeruen/ without whiche good-
ly in this lyfe creatures mowen nat endure/
and moſt ben nouriſſhen to mans ẏnde/ with
out great traueyle/ great tylthe/ and longe a-
bidynge tyme/comen nat out of the erthe/and
it with ſeede tofore ordayned ſuche herbes to
make ſprung and forthe growe. Right ſo the
parfyte blyſſe/ that we haue in meanynge of
durynge tyme to abyde may nat come ſo lyght-
ly/ but with great traueyle & right bely tylth/
and yet good ſeed to be ſowe/for ofte ẏ croppe
fayleth of badde ſeede/ be it neuer ſo wel tra-
ueyled. And thilke blyſſe thou ſpoke of ſo lizt
ly in cõmyng/ trewly is nat neceſſary ne abi-
dynge: and but it the better be ſtamped/ & the
venomous ieuſe out wronge/ it is lykely to
enpoyſonen al tho that therof taſten. Ver-
tes right bytter ben ẏ herbes that ſhewen firſt
the yere of her owne ẏnde. Wel the more is the
harneſt that yeldeth many graynes/tho longe
and ſore it hath ben traueyled. What woldeſt
thou demen if a man wold yeue thre quarters
of nobles of golde/that were a precious gyft:
ye certes (qõ I). And what(qõ ſhe)thre quar
ters ful of perles: Certes (qõ I) that were a
riche gyfte. And what (qõ ſhe) of as mokel a-
zure: (Qõ I) a precious gyfte at ful. Were
nat (qõ ſhe) a noble gifte of al theſe atones:
In good faith (qõ I) for wãtyng of englyſſh
namyng of ſo noble a worde/ I can nat for ẏ
nouſneſſe yeue it a name. Rightefully(qõ ſhe)
haſte thou demed/ and yet loue vnytte in ver-
tue/ paſſeth al the golde in this erthe. Good
wyl accordant to reaſon/ with no manet pro-
perte may be countreuayled/al the azure l the
worlde is nat to accõpte in reſpecte of reaſon/
loue that with good wyl & reaſon accordeth/
with non erthly riches may nat ben amẽded.
This yeft haſt thou yeuen I knowe my ſelfe
and thy margarite thilke gift hath receyued/ i
whiche thynge to rewarde ſhe hath her ſelfe
bounde. But thy gifte as I ſaid/ by no manet
riches may be amẽded/ wherfore with thynge
that may nat be amẽded/ ẏ ſhalt of thy mar-
garites trist wiſeneſſe be rewarded. Right ſuf-
fred yet neuer but euery good dede ſõtyme to
be polde. al wolde thy Margarite with no re-
warde the quyte/ Right that neuer more dieth
thy mede in merit wol puruey. Certes ſuch ſo
dayne bliſſe as thou firſt nẽpneſt/ tryst wil hẽ
rewarde as ẏ wel is worthy/ & though at thyn
eye it ſemeth the rewarde ẏ deſert to paſſe/ trist
can after ſende ſuche bytterneſſe euely it to re-
warde: ſo ẏ ſodayne blyſſe by alwayes of re-
ſon in gret goodneſſe may not ben acompted/
but bliſſe long/both long it abideth/ & endleſſe
it wol laſt. Se why thy wyl is endeleſſe/ for if
thou louedeſt euer/thy wyl is euer ther tabyde
and neuermore to chaũge: euenhed of rewarde
muſt ben don by right: than muſte nedes thy
grace & this blyſſe endeleſſe in ioy to vnbyde.
Euenlyche diſeſe aſketh euenlyche ioy/whiche
haſtely thou ſhalt haue. A (qõ I) it ſuffyſeth
not than alone good wyl/be it neuer ſo wel w'
reſon medled/but if it be in good ſeruyce longe
traueyled. And ſo throughe ſeruyce ſhul men
come to the ioye/ & this me thynketh ſhulde be
the weppyng tre of whiche ye firſt meued.

Ury trouth (qõ she) hast thou no we
cõcerned of these thiges in thyne hert
hastely shalt thou ue able very ioye & parfyte
blysse to retryue. & now we I wot wel thou de-
syrest to knowe the maner of braunches/ that
out of the tree shulde spring. Therof lady (qõ
I) hertely I pou pray: for than leue I wol/
that right soone after I shal atast of the frute
that I so long haue desyred. Thou hast herde
(qõ she) in what wyse this tre to soth this ha-
ue I declared/as in grounde & in stocke of wey
nyng. Iust the grounde shulde be thy frewyl ful
in thyne hert/ & the stocke (as I sayde) shulde
be cõtynuannce in good fernere/by long tyme
in trauayle/ tyl it were in greatnesse right wel
wopen. & whan this tree suche gretnesse hath
caught/as I haue rehersed: the braunches than
that the frute shulde forth bringe/speche must
they be nedes in voice of prayer/ in cõplaynig
wise vsed. Out alas (qõ I tho) he is sorow-
fully worided that hydeth his speche & spareth
his cõplayntes to make/ What shal I speke þ
care: but payne euer lyke to hel/sore hath me
assayled/ & so forforth in payne me thronge/
that I leue my tre in sert/ & neuer shal it frute
forth bring. Certes he is greatly eased/ þ dare
his pitup mone discouer to a true felowe/that
cõpyng hath & myght/ wherthrough his plemt
in any thynge may be amẽded. & more el more
is he ioyed that with herte of hardyneesse dare
cõplayne to his lady/ what cares that he suf-
freth/by hope of mercy with grace to be auaũ
ced. Truely I saye for me/ sythe I came this
Margarit to serue/durst I neuer me discouer
of no maner disease/ & wel the later hath myn
herte hardyed suche thynges to done/ for the
great bountes & worthy refressshmentes that
she of her grace goodly without any desert on
my halue ofte hath me rẽwed/ and nere her
goodnesse the more with grace & with mercy
medled/ whiche passen al deserues/ trauayle/
and seruynges/that I in any degre might en-
duie/ I wolde were I shulde be without recou-
uere/in getting of thie blysse for euer. Thus
haue I stylled my disease/ thus haue I cou-
red my care/ that I bury in sorouful anoy/ as
gledes & coles wastyn a fyre vnd deed asshen.
Wel the lotte is the fyre/ that with asshen it is
ourtlepe: right longe this wo haue I suffred.
Lo (qõ Loue) how we thou farest: me thynketh
the palasy yuel hath ataerred thy witte/ as
fast as thou hurst forwarde/ anon sodaynly
backwarde thou mowest: Shal nat yet al thy
leudnesse out of thy braynes: dul bey thy sul
ful vnderstãding/ thy wyl hath thy wyt so a
maistred. Wost thou nat wel (qõ she) but eue
ry tree in his sesonable tyme of burionynge
shewe his blomes fro within/ i signe of what
frute shulde out of him spring/ ells þ frute for
that pere may haste delyuered/ be the grounde
neuer so good. & though the stocke be mighty
at the ful/ & the braunches seer & no burions
shewe/farwel the gardyner he may pype with
ay pue lese his frute is sayled. Wherfore thy
braũches must burionen i presẽce of thy lady/
if thou desyre any frute of thy ladies grace/
but beware of thy ipse/ that thou no wodelay
vse/as in asbyng of thynges that stretchen in
to shame/for tha myght thou nat spede by no
way that I can espy. Vertue wol nat suffre
villany out of him selfe to spring. Thy wor-
des may nat be queynt ne of subtel manet vn
derstadinge. Freel witted people supposen in
suche poesies so to be begyled/in open vnderstã-
dinge must euery worde be vsed. Voice with-
out clere vnderstãdyng of sentẽce saith Aristo
tel/right nouȝt piteth i hert. Thy wordes thã
to abide in hert/ & clene in ful sentẽce of trewe
meanyng platly must thou shewe & euer be obe
dient/ her hestes & her wyls to pfourne/ and be
thou set in suche a wyt to wete by a sope euer
more what she meaneth. And he that syst nat
to speke/but stylly his disease suffer: what wõ
der is it tho he come neuer to his blysse? Who
that trauepleth vnwist/ & coueyteth thyng vn
knowe/ vnwetyng he shal be quyted/ & with
vnknowe thyng rewarded. Good lady (qõ I
than) it hath ofte be sene/ that wethers & stor-
mes so hugely haue sal in burionyng tyme/ &
by perte duresse han beaten of the spynges so
clene/ wherthrough þ frute of thilke pere hath
sayled. It is a great grace whan burions han
good wethers/ that frutes forthe to bringe.
Alas/ than after suche stormes how we harde is
it to anoyde/tyl este wedung & peres han ma-
sked her circute coures al about/er any frute be

able

able to be tasted he is shent for shame/ ꝑ fooles is rebuked of his speche. He that is ny fyre bren-nyng sore smarteth for disease. Hym thynketh full long er the water come/ that shulde ꝑ fyre quenche. Whan men gone after a leche/ the bo-dy is buryed. Lo how we semely this frute wey-eth/ me thynketh that of tho frutes maye no man taste/ for pure bytternesse in sauoure. In this wyse bothe frute and tree wasten away togeder/ though moche besy occupation haue be spente to bringe it so ferforthe/ that it was able to spring. A lyte speche hath wasted that al this labour is in ydel. I not (qꝺ ſhe) wherof it serueth thy question to assoyle/ me thynketh the no we duller i wittes/ than whan I with the first mette/ although a man be-hol-de/ comenly for a foole he is nat demed/ but if he no good wol lerne/ sottes and fooles lette lyghtly out of mynde/ the good that men tra-cheth hem. I sayꝺ therfore thy flocke must be stronge/ ꝛ in greatnesse wel herteo/ the tree is ful feble that at the firste dent falleth: and al though frute sayleth one pere or two/ yet shal suche a seasoy come one tyme or other/ that shal bringe out frute that is nothyng preterit ne passed there is nothyng future ne cōmyng/ but al thynges togeder in that place ben pre-sent euerlastyng without any meuyng/ wher-fore to god al thynge is as now we: ꝛ though a thynge be nat in kyndly nature of thynges as yet/ and if it shulde be herafter/ yet euermore we shul saye god it maketh be tyme present/ ꝛ now we for no future ne preterit in hym may be founde. Wherfore his wetyng ꝛ his before we tyng/ is al one in vnderstādyng. Than if we-tyng ꝛ before wetyng of god putteth in neces-site to al thynges whiche he wot or before wot ne thyng after eternyte/ or els after any tyme he wol or dothe of lyberte but al of necessyte/ whiche thyng if thou wene it be apenst reason nat thorow we necessyte to be or nat to be/ al thi-ge that god wot or before wot/ to be or nat to be/ ꝛ yet nothynge defendeth any thynge to be wyst or to be before wist of hi in our wylles or our doynges to be done/ or els cōmynge to be for free arbitrement. Whan thou haste these declarations wel vnderstāde/ than shalt thou fynde it resonable al prome/ ꝛ that many thi-ges be nat thorow we necessyte/ but thorow hy-berte of wyl/ saue necessyte of free wyl/ as I tofore sayd: ꝛ as me thynketh al vtterly decla-red. Whe thynketh lady (qꝺ I) so I shulde pray nat displease/ ꝛ euermore youre reuerēce to be-pe/ that these thynges cōtrarien in any vnder stādyng/ for ye sayne sometyme as thorow we ly-berte of wyl ꝛ also thorow we necessite. Of this haue I yet no sauour/ without better declara-tion. What wonder (qꝺ she) is there in these thynges/ sithen al day thou shalte se at thyne eye/ in many thynges reuerseth in hem self re-uers/ thorow dyuers reasons/ as thus. I pray the (qꝺ she) which thinge ben more reuers thā comen ꝛ gone: for if I bydde the come to me/ and thou come/ after whan I bydde the go ꝛ thou go/ thou reuersest fro thy first cōmyng. That is soth (qꝺ I) ꝛ yet (qꝺ she) in thy first alone by dyuers reasone was ful reuersynge to vnderstāde. Ha how we (qꝺ I) What shal I shewe the (qꝺ she) by ensāple of thynges that haue kyndly mouyng. Is there any thyng ꝑ meueth more kyndly than doth the heuens eye whiche I clepe the sonne. Sothly (qꝺ I) me semeth it most kyndly to moue. Thou sayest soth (qꝺ she) Than if thou loke to the sonne/ in what parte he be vnder heuen/ euermore he hergheth hym in mouyng fro thilke place/ and higheth meuyng to warde the ilke same place/ to thilke place from whiche he gothe he hegh-eth cōmynge/ and without any ceasynge to that place he neigheth from whiche he is chal ged ꝛ withdrawe. But now we in these thynges after dyuersite of reason/ reuers in one thinge may be sey without repugnaunce. Wherfore in the same wyse/ without any repugnaunce by my reasons tofore maked/ al is one to be-leue/ somthyng to be thorow we necessyte cōmin ge for it is cōmyng/ ꝛ yet with no necessite cō-strayned to be cōming/ but with necessite that cometh out of free wyl/ as I haue sayd. Tho lyft me a lytel to speke/ ꝛ gan flynt my penne of my writyng/ ꝛ sayd in this wyse. Truly lady as me thynketh/ I can allege authorites gret that cōtrarien youre sayenges. Job saith of maunes person/ thou hast putte his terme/ whiche thou might nat passe. Than saye I that no man may shorte ne lengthe the day or-dayned

beyned of the doyng: althe sometyme to be it semeth some may to be a thynge of fre wyll wherefore me thynketh he seyneth. Lope for sothe (qð she) it is nothing agenst thy sayeng for god is not begyled/me he seith nothing whether it shal come of sybarite or elo of necessyte/ yet it is sayd to be ordayned of god immouable/ whiche at many or it be done may be chaūged. Suche thyng also is that Poule the apostel sayth of hem that to fore were purposed to be sayntes/as thus/ whome that god before wyst/ & hath predestyned/ cōformes of ymage of his sonne/ that he shulde ben the furste begetyn/ that is to saye/ here amonges many brethern/ & whom he hath predestyned/hem he hath cleped/ and whom he hath cleped/ hem he hath iustyfyed/ & whom he hath iustyfyed/hem he hath magnyfyed. This purpose after whiche they ben cleped sayntes or holy in the euerlasting present/ where neither tyme passed ne tyme cōmynge/ but euer it is onely present/ & nowe as moche a moēt as seuyn thousande wynter/ & so aforwarde without any meuyng is nothyng (pch tēporel presence/ for thinge that there is euer present. Yet amōges your mery er it be in your presence it is mouable thorowe sybarite of arbytrement. And right as in the euerlastyng present no maner thyng was ne shalbe/ but onely is/ & nowe here in your tēporel tyme/ somthyng was & is/ & shalbe/ but mouynge stoundes/ & in thes is no maner repugnaunce. Right so in the euerlastynge presence nothyng may be chaūged: & in your tēporel tyme other while it is passed mouable by sybarite of wyll or it be do/ without any incōuenyence therof to folowe. In your temporel tyme is no suche presence as in the tother/ for your present is done/ when passed & to come gynneth entre/ whiche tymes here amōges you entreth easily folowyng other/ but the presēte euerlastyng dureth in onehed/ without any ymaginable chaūgyng/ & euer is present and nowe. Lo why the course of the planettes & ouerwhelmynges of the sonne in dayes & nyghtes/ with a newe gynnyng of hys circute after it is ended/ that is to sayn/ one yere to folowe another. These maken your trāsitory tymes with chaūgynge of sesons & mutacion of prospe. But right as your tēporel presence coueryeth euery place/ & al thinges in euery of your tymes be cōtayned/ & as nowe both sey & wist to goddes very knowynge. Than (qð I) me wondreth why Poule spake these wordes/ by force of signification i tyme passed/ that god his sayntes before wist/hath predestined/hath cleped/ hath iustyfyed/ & hath magnyfied: Me thynketh he shulde haue sayde tho wordes in tyme present/ & that had ben more accordaunt to the euerlastyng present/than to haue spoke in preterit force of passed vnderstandyng.

O (qð Loue) by these wordes I se wel thou hast lytel vnderstādyng of the euerlastyng p̄sence/ or elo of my before spoken wordes/ for neuer a thing of tho thou hast nēpned was to fore other or after other/but al atones euēlych at the god ben/ & al togider in the euerlastyng present be nowe to vnderstādyng/ the eternal presence/as I sayd/hath inclose togider l one/ al tymes/ in which close & one al thynges that ben in dyuers tymes & in dyuers places tēporel without posterioute or priouite be closed therin ppetual nowe/ & maked to dwel in present sight. But there thou sayest that Poule shulde haue spoke thilke forsaid sentence be tyme present/ & that most shulde haue ben accordaunt to the euerlastynge presence/ why gabbest thou to thy wordes: Sothly I say Poule moued þ wordes by signification of tyme passed/to shewe fully that thilk wordes were nat put for tēporel signification/ for al thilk tyme were nat thilke sentēce tēporallych borne/ whiche that Poule pronounced god haue to fore knowe/ & haue cleped than magnified/ wherefore we it may wel be knowe that Poule vsed tho wordes of passed signification/ for nede & lacke of a worde in mānes bodily speche be to benynge the euerlastyng presence. And therfore worde is moste semelyche in sybenesse to euerlastyng presence/ he toke his sentence for thynges that here before ben passed/ vtterly be immouable/ ilyke to þ euerlasting presēce. As thilke that ben there neuer nowe not ben present/ so thynges of tyme passed ne nowe in no wyse not ben passed: but al thinges in your temporal presence that passen in a lytel while/ shullen ben not present. So than in that it is

more

more ſymilytude to the euerlaſtyng preſence / ſignification of tyme paſſed / than of tyme temporal preſent / & ſo more in accordaunce. In this maner what thynge of theſe that ben done thoro we ſee arbitrement / or els as neceſſary / holy writte pronouceth / after eternyte he ſpeketh / in whiche preſēce is euerlaſtyng ſothe and nothyng but ſothe immouable / nat after tyme / in whiche naught alway ben your wyſles & your actes. & right as while they be nat / it is nat nedeful hem to be: ſo ofte it is nat nedeful that ſomtyme they ſhulde be. Anow (quod I) for yet muſt I be lerned by ſome ex ample. Of loue (quod ſhe) wol I nowe ex ample make / ſithen I vnowe the heed vnotte in that yerde. Lo / somtyme thou wrytest no arte / ne arte than in no wyſ to write. & right as while yᵘ writeſt nat / or els wolt nat write / it is nat nedeful the to write / or els wylne to write. And for to make ỳ vnowe vtterly / that thynges ben other wiſe in the euerlaſtyng preſence / than in temporal tyme: ſe nowe my good childe / for somthyng is in the euerlaſtyng preſence / than in temporal tyme / it was nat in eternyte tyme / in eterne preſence ſhal it nat be. Than no reaſon defendeth / that ſōthynge ne may be in tyme temporal mouyng / that in eterne is immouable. For ſothe it is no more contrary ne reuers for to be mouable in tyme temporel / and mouable in eternyte / than nat to be in any tyme / and to be alway in eternite and haue to be or els to come in tyme temporel / & nat haue be ne nought cōmyng to be in eternyte. Yet neuer the later / I ſay nat ſomthyng to be neuer in tyme temporel / that euer is eternyte / but alonely in somtyme nat to be For I ſaye nat thy loue to mowe in no tyme to be / but to day alone I denye ne it to be / and yet neuer the later it is alwaye in eternyte.

Alſo (quod I) it ſemeth to me that cōmyng thyng or els paſſed here in your temporal tyme to be / in eternite euer nowe and preſent oweth nat to be demed / and yet folowth nat thylke thynge / that was or els ſhal be / in no maner therto ben paſſed / or els cōmyng: than vtterly ſhal we denye / for there without creaſyng / it is in his preſent maner. O (quod ſhe) myne owne diſciple / nowe gynneſt thou able to haue the name of my ſeruaunt. Thy wytte is cleared / away is nowe errour of cloude in vnderſtanding / away is blyndneſſe of lone / away is thoughtfull ſtudy / of medlyng maners haſtily ſhalte thou entre in to the wye of me / that am thyne owne maiſtreſſe. Thou haſte (quod ſhe) in a fewe wordes / wel and clerely concluded moſt of my mater. And right as there is no reuers ne contrarioufte in the thynges / right ſo without any repugnaunce / it is ſayd somthyng to be mouable in tyme temporel / & for it be / that in eternyte dwellith immouable nat afore it be or after that it is / but without ceſſyng / for right naught is there after tyme / that ſame is there euerlaſtynge / that temporal ſyche somtyme nys / and to some it be it maye not be / as I haue ſayd. Nowe ſothly (qđ I) this haue I wel vnderſtande / ſo that nowe me thynketh that preſcience of god and free arbytrement without any repugnaunce accordeth / and ỳ maketh the ſtrengthe of eternyte / whiche encloſeth by preſence durynge al tymes / and al thinges thee ben / han ben / and ſhal ben in eny tyme. I wolde nowe (qđ I) a ſyker vnderſtande ſythen that al thyng thus before wot / whether thilke wetynge be of the thynges / or els thilke thynges ben to ben of godes wetyng / and ſo of god nothynge is: and if euery thyng be thoro wee godes wetyng / and therof take his beyng / than ſhulde god be maker and auctour of badde werkes / and ſo he ſhulde not ryghtfully punyſſhe yuel doynges of mannynde. (Qđ Loue) I ſhal tel the / thou leſſon to serue myne owne true ſeruaunt / the noble philoſophical poete / in Engliſſh / whoſe euermore hym beſeeth and traueyleth right ſore my name to encreaſe / wherfore al that wylleth me good / owe to do hym worſſhyp & reuerence bothe / truely his better ne his peere in ſchole of my rules coude I neuer fynde: he (qđ ſhe) in a treatiſe ỳ he made of my ſeruant Troylus / hath this mater touched / and at the full this queſtyon aſſoyled. Certaynly his noble ſapyence can I not amende: In goodnes of gentyl manlyche ſperke / without any maner of repeate of flateries ymagynacion in wytte and in good reaſon of ſentence he paſſeth al other makers. In the boke of Troylus / ſhe anſwers to thy

to thy questyon mayste thou lerne/ neuer the later yet may lightly thyne vnderstandynge fondely be lerned/ if thou haue ony wyng of these .ii. false thinges/ with that thou haue vnderstandyng of .ii. the laste chapitres of this seconde boke/ ꝑ is to say/ good to be somthyng/ and bad to want al maner beyng/ for badde is nothyng els but absence of good/ and that god is good/ maketh that good dedes ben good/ in yuel he maketh ꝑ they ben but nauȝt/ that they ben bad: for to nothyng is badnesse to be. I haue (qꝺ I tho) ynough shewyng therin/ me nedeth of other thinges to here/ that is to saye/ how we I shal come to my blysse so longe desyred.

In this mater to forn declared (qꝺ loue) I haue wel shewed/ that euery mā hath fre arbytrement of thinges in his power to do or vnder what ony lyeth. Out of this ꝺ oulde muste come the spire/ that by processe of tyme shal in greatnesse sperde/ to haue braunches & blosmes of wayuyng frute in grace/ of whiche the taste and the sauour is endelesse blysse in ioy euer to endure. Now we lady (qꝺ I) that tree to set sayne wolde I lerne. Do thou shalt (qꝺ she) er thou departe hence. The first thing thou muste set thy werke on groude syker and good/ accordaunt to thy spunges. For if thou desyre grapes/ thou goest not to the hasel/ ne for to fetchen roses/ thou seekest not on okes: and of thou shalt haue hony soukles/ thou lezurest the frute of the soure dgebe. Wherfore if thou desyre this blysse i parfite ioy/ thou muste set thy purpose there vertue solweth/ and not to soule after ꝑ bodily goodes/ as I said whan thou were wayuyng in thy seconde booke. And for thou haste set thy selfe in so noble a place/ and vtterly lowed in thyn herte the misgoyng of thy first purpose/ this setteles is the eyer to spunge/ and the more lighter thy soule in grace to be lyfted. And trewly thy desyre/ that is to say thy wyl/ algates mote ben stedfast in this matre without any chaungynge/ for if it be stedfast/ no man maye it voyde. yes parde (qꝺ I) my wyl maye ben turned by frendes/ and by craft of manere & thretynge in lesynge of my lyfe and of my frendes/ and in many other wyse/ that me cometh not to mynde. And also it mote ofte ben out of thought/ for no remembraunce may holde one thyng contynuelly in herte/ be it neuer so lusty desyred.

Now se (qꝺ she) thou thy wyl shal folowe/ thy frewil to be grouded cōtynuelly to abyde: All is thy frewyl that thou soueste and haste lowed/ and yet shal louen this Margaryte perle/ and in thy wyl thou thinkest to holde it. Thou is thy wyl knyt in loue/ not to chaunge for no newe lust besyde: this wyl teacheth thyn herte from al maner varyeng. But than although thou be thretened in dethe or els in other wyse/ yet is it in thyn arbytrement to chose/ thy loue to voyde or els to holde: And thilke arbytrement is in a maner a iugement betwene desyre and thy herte. And if thou deme to loue thy good wyl sayleth/ than arte thou worthy no blysse that good wyl shulde deserue: and if thou chose contynuaunce in thy good seruyce/ than thy good wyl abydeth/ nedes blysse folowyng of thy good wyl must come by strēgth of thilke iugement: for thy first wyl ꝑ taught thyn herte to abyde/ & halte it from thescha[u]nge with thy reson is accorded. Trewly this maner of wyl thou shal abyde/ impossible it were to turne if thy hert be trewe/ and if euery man dyligently the meuynges of his wyl consyder/ he shal wel vnderstande that good wyl knyt with reason/ but in a false herte neuer is voyded: for power & might of keepyng this good wyl is thorow we lyberte of arbytrement in hert/ but good wil to kepe may not fayle. Ese than if it fayle/ it sheweth it selfe that good wyl in keepyng is not there. And thus false wyl that putteth out the good/ anone constrayneth the herte to accorde in louynge of thy good wyl/ and thus accordaunce betwene false wyl & thyn herte/ in fallyte ben lybened togyther. yet a lytel wol I say the/ in good wyl thy good wyles to rayse & strength. Take hede to me (qꝺ she) how we thy wylles thou shalt vnderstande. Right as ye han in your body dyuers membres/ and fyue sondre wyttes/ euerych aparte to his owne doyng/ whiche thynges ne instrumētes ye vsen/ as your handes aparte to handle/ fete to go/ tonge to speke/ eye to se: Right so ꝑ soule hath in hem certayne strengthes and

strengthes whiche he vseth as instrumētes to his certayne doynges. Reason is in the soule/ which he vseth thinges to knowe & to prour/ & wyl whiche he vseth to wylne: & yet is neyther wyl ne reason al ỳ soule/ but euerych of hem is a thing by hym self in ỳ soule. And right as enerich hath thus singuler instrumētes by hē selfe/ they han as wel dyuers aptes & dyuers maner vsinges/ & thilke aptes mo wey in wyl hen cleped affectiōs. Affection is an instrumēt of willynge in his apetytes. Wherfore moste folke sayn/ if a resonable creatures soule any thinge feruētly wylneth/ affectuously he wylneth/ & thus may wyl by terme of equiuocas in thre wayes hen vnderstāde: One is instrumēt of willing/ another is affection of this instrumēt: & the third is vse/ ỳ setteth it a werke Instrumēt of willyng is thilke strēgth of the soule/ which ỳ cōstrayneth to wylne/ right as reason is instrument of resone/ which ye vsen whan ye loken. Affection of this instrumēt is a thyng/ by whiche ye be drawe desyrously any thyng to wylne in couetous maner/ al be it so: the tyme out of your mynde: as if it come in your thought thilke thyng to remembre/ anon ye ben willyng thilke to done or els to haue. And thus is instrument wyl/ & affection is wyl also/ to wylne thynge as I sayd: as for to wylne helth/ whan wyl nothig theron thinketh/ for anon as it cometh to memorie it is in wyl/ and so is affection to wylne slepe whan it is out of mynde/ but anon as it is remembred wyl wylneth slepe/ whan his tyme cometh of ỳ doynge. For affection of wyl neuer accordeth to sickneſſe/ ne alway to waſte. Right so in a true louers affection of willyng instrument/ is to wylne truthe in his seruyce/ and this affectiō alway abydeth/ although he be slepyng or thretned/ or els not theron thynkyng/ but anon as it cometh to mynde/ anon he is stedfast in that wyl to abyde. Vse of this instrument forsothe is another thing by hym selfe/ & that hane ye not but whan ye be doyng ỳ wylled thing by affecte or instrumēt of wyl purposed or desyred/ & this maner of vsage in my seruyce wisely nedeth to be ruled frō wayters wt enuye closed/ from spekers ful of idāge ing words/ from proude folk & hautayn/ that lambes & innocētes hathe scornen & despysen.

Thus in doyng varieth the actes of willynge: euerich from other/ & yet ben they cleped wyl/ & the name of wyl bitterly owen they to haue/ as instrumēt of wyl is wyl/ whan ye turne ỳ to purpose of any thing to don/ be it to spē or to stāde/ or any such thig elo. This instrumēt nay ben had/ although affect & vsage be left out of doyng/ right as ye haue sayd & resonyd: yet alway vse ye gretteſt wisdom in hem/ shal he be/ & they in god. Now we than whan al false folke be ashamed/ which weneth al despaire & crafty thig be swetter & better to ỳ body/ than hemely is to ỳ soule: this is the grace & the fruite that I long haue desyred/ it doth me good ỳ sauour to smel. Christ now to ỳ I crye of mercy & of grace/ & grant of thy goodnes to euery maner redere ful vnderstādyng in this lytle pamflet to haue/ & let no man wene other cause in the werke/ than is verily ỳ soth: For enuy is euer redy al innocētes to shende/ wherfore I wolde that good speche enuy euermore hynder. But no man wene this werke be sufficiently made/ for godd werke passeth mans/ no mans wyt to pfyt werke may by no way purnay thende: How shuld I than so lende/ aught wene of pfection any ende to gete. Neuer the later grace/ glone/ & laude I yelde & put wt wo: shypful re uerēces to ỳ soth fast god I thie/ with inute closed whiche ỳ the heuy sāgour of my sickneſſe hath turned in to myth of helth to recouer: for trist as I was sore wed thoro ỳ gloton cloud of manyfolde sickly sore w/ so muth eyen re inyng helth hath me gladed & gretly cōforted. I beseche & pray therfore/ & I crye on godes gret ppte & on his moste mercy/ ỳ this present scorgi of my flesh mo w make medcyn & sich craft of my inner mans helth/ so ỳ my passed trespas & temes/ though wepyng of myn eyen hen wasshe/ & I voyded from al maner diseſe/ & no more to wepe hereafter/ I no wise kept thoro we godes grace: so ỳ godes hāde which ỳ mercyably me hath scorged/ herafter in good plite frō there mercyably me kepe & defende. In this boke be many puny thig wipled & folded vnneth shul lewde men ỳ pintes vnfolde/ wherfore I pray to ỳ holygost he lene of his eyntmētes mens witt to clene/ & for godd loue no man wōder why or how this querlion come in my mynde/ for my great lusty desyre was of

this ladye to hey vnfourtuned/ my feuderasse to amende. Lerten I knowe not other wennes wyttes what I shulde asse/ or in answere what I shulde saye/ I am so sturde my selfe/ that maddel mout lempage pat me bifowrth. I haue made therfore as I couder/ but not fuz fycyently as I wolde/ and as mater yaue me sentence/ for my dul wytte is hyndred by step mother of forgetyng/ and with clowde of vnknowyng/ that stoppeth the lyght of my Mastarite perfit/ wherfore it may not shyne on me as it shulde. I desyre not onely a good reder/ but also I requyre and pray a good booke amender/ in correction of woordes and of sentence/ and purly thus mede I coueyte for my trauayle/ that euery wyfer and herer of this feude fantasye/ deuoute sowsons and prayers to god the great auge pedery/ and prayen for me/ in that wyse that in his domes my synnes mowe ben releassed & forgeuen: he that prayeth for other/ for him selfe trauayleth. Also I praye that euery man parfytly mowe knowe thoro we what entencion of herte this treatyse haue I dialwe. Howe was it þ syghtful Mañ na in oferte to chyldren of Israel was spyrytuel meate: bodely also it was/ for mennes bodies it nourisheth. And yet neuer þ later Chryst it signyfyed. Ryght so a iewel betokeneth a gemme/ and that is a stone vertuous/ or els a perle. Margarite a woman betokeneth grace/ lernyng/ or wisdom of god/ or els holy churche. If ferd thoro we vertue is made holy flesshe/ what is that our god saythe: It is the spyrit that quyckeneth/ the flesshe of nothyng it profyteth. Flesshe is flesshly vnderstandynge: flesshe without grace & loue naught is worth. The inner sterth/ the spyrit quyckeneth vnderstandyng. Charyte is loue/ and loue is charyte/ god graunt vs al therin to be fryended. And thus the Testament of Loue is ended.

¶ Thus endeth the Testament of Loue
And here after folowyth

The lamentatyon of Mary Magdaleyne.

Dlyghted in the waue of mortal bitternesse
Alas for wo/ to whom shal I complayne
Or who shal bewayle this great heuynesse
Fro me wofull Mary/ wofull Magdaleyne
My lorde is gon/ alas who wrought this treyne
Thus sodayne chaunce perseth my herte so depe
That nothyng can I do/ but wayle and wepe

My lorde is gone/ þ here in grauue was layde
After his great passyon/ and dethe cruel
Who hath him thus agayne betrayde?
Or what man here aboute can me tel
Where he is become/ the prince of Israel
Jesus of Nazareth/ my goostly socour
My parfyte ioye/ and hope of al honour

What creature hath him hence caryed?
Or howe might this so sodainly befal?
I wolde I had here with him tarryed
And so shulde I haue had my purpose al
I bought oyntmentes ful precious & royal
Wherwith I hoped his corps to anoynted
But he thus gone/ my mynde is disappointed

Whyle I therfore aduertyse and beholde
This pytous chaunce/ here in my presence
Ful lytel maruayle though my herte be colde
Consydring lo/ my lordes absence
Alas that I so ful of negligence
Shulde be founde/ bycause I come so late
Al men may saye I am vnfortunate

Cause of my sorowe/ men may vnderstonde
(Quia tulerunt dominum meum)
Another is/ that I ne may fonde
I wotnere/ Vbi posuerunt eum
Thus I muste bewayle/ Dolorem meum
With herty wepping/ I can no better deserue
Tyl dethe approche/ my herte for to kerue

My herte oppressi with sodayne auenture
By feruent anguysshe is bewrapped so
That longe thus lyfe I may not endure
Suche is my payne/ suche is my mortal wo
Neuertheles/ to what partie shal I go
In hope to fynde myne owne turtyl true
My ghostly ioye/ my souereyne lorde Jesu

Sythe al my ioye/that I cal hie presence
Is thus remoued/now wo I am ful of mone
Alas the whyle/I made no prouydence
For this mishap/wherfore I sygh and grone
Sorour to synde/to what place might I gone
Fayne I wolde to some man my herte breke
I not to whom I may complayne or speke

Alone here I stande/ful sore and ful sadde
Whiche hoped to haue sene my lorde & kyng
Smal cause haue I to be merry or gladde
Remembryng this bytterful departyng
In this worlde is no creature lyuyng
That was to me so good and gracious
His loue also than golde more precious

Ful sore I sygh/without comforte agayne
There is no cure to my saluacion
His brēnyng loue/my hert so dothe cōstrayne
Alas here is a wofull permutacion
Wherof I synde no ioye nor consolacion
Therfore my payne al onely to confesse
With dethe I feare wol ende my heuynesse

This wo and anguysshe is intollerable
If I byde here/lyfe can I nat sustayne
If I go hence my paynes be vncurable
Where hi to synde/I knowe no place certayne
And thus I not of these thynges twayne
Whiche I may take/& whiche I may refuse
My herte is wouded heron to thynke or muse

A whyle I shal stande in this mournyng
In hope if any bisyon wol appere
That of my loue might tel some good tydyng
Whiche my to ioy/might chaunge my wepyng
I trust in his grace & his mercy dere (chere
But at the leest/though I ther with me dyl
I shal nat spare to wayle & wepe my fyl

And if that I dye in suche auenture
I can no more/but welcome as my chaunce
My bones shal rest here in this sepulture
My lyfe/my dethe/is at his ordynaunce
It shal be tolde in euerlastyng remembraūce
Thus to departe/is to me no shame
And also therof I am nothyng to blame

Hope agaynst me hath her course ytake
There is no more/but thus shal I dye
I se right wel my lorde hath me forsake
But in my querele/cause haue I more why
Though he be farre hence/and nothyng nye
Yet my wofull herte after him dothe sobe
And causith terres to ren downe by my cheke

Thynkyng alas/I haue lost his presence
Whiche in this worlde was al my sustinaunce
I crye and cal with herty diligence
But there is no wight yeueth attendaunce
Me to certifye of myne enquysicion
Wherfore I whyl to al this worlde be wraye
How that my lorde is slayne & bowne away

Though I mourne it is no great wonder
Sythe he is al my ioye in special
And now I thynke we be so farre a sonder
That him to se I feare neuer I shal
It helpeth no more after him to cal
Ne after him to enquyre in any coste
Alas how is he thus gone and lost?

The iewes I thynke ful of misery
Sette in malyce/by their besy cure
With force and might of gyleful trechery
Hath enterrupted my lordes sepulture
And borne away that precious fygure
Leuyng of it nothyng/if they haue done so
Marred I am/alas what shal I do

With their vengeaunce insaciable
Now haue they him entreated so
That to reporte it is to lamentable
They bete his body from toppe to the too
Neuer man was borne that felte suche wo
They wounded him alas with al greuaunce
The bloode downe ryled in most habundaūce

The bloody rowes streamed downe ouer al
They him assayled so malycously
With their scourges and strokes bersyal
They spared nat/but smote incessauntly
To satisfye their malyce they were ful besy
They spyt I his face/they smote here & there
He groned ful sore/and sobbe manyfolde

They

They crowned him wᵗ thornes sharpe & kene
The veynes rent/the bloode ran doun a pace
With bloode ouercome were both his eyen
And bolne with strokes was his blessed face
They him entreated/as men without grace
They kneled to him/& made many a scorne
Lyke lechoundes they saue him al to torne

Upon a mighty crosse in length and brede
These tormentours shewed their cursydnesse
They nayled him without pyte or drede
His precious bloode brast out in largenesse
They stirryed him along/ as men mercilesse
The very veynes al to myne apparence
Ryued a sonder/for that great vyolence

Al this I beholdyng with myn eyen twayne
Stode there besyde/ with ruful attendaunce
And euer me thought/he beyng in ꝑ payne
Loked on me/ with oerdy countenaunce
As he had sayd in his special remembraunce
Farwel Magdalen/departe must I nedys hens
Thy herte is/ Tanꝑ cara liquescens

Whiche ruful syght when I gan beholde
Out of my wytte I almoste distraught
Tare my herre/my handes wrange & folde
And of ꝑ sight my hert drank such a draught
That many a sal I swounyng there I caught
I bumsed my body/ fallyng on the grounde
Whyrof I se many a greuous wounde

Than these wretches/ ful of al frowardnesse
Gaue him to drinke eysel tempred with gal
Alas/that payson ful of bytternesse
Thy louers there constred than to appal
And yet therof might he not drinken at al
But spoke these wordes/ as him thought best
Father of heuen/ Consummatum est

Than kneled I downe/in paynes outrage
Kyssyng ꝑ crosse within myn armes twayn
His bloode defyled downe on my vysage
Thy clothes eke the droppes dyd distayne
To haue dyed for him I wolde ful fayne
But what shulde it auayle/ I dyd so
Spede him/ Suspensus in patibulo

Thus my lorde ful derre was al disgysed
With bloode/payne/ and woundes many one
His veynes brast/his coputes al to ryued
Partyng a sonder the flesshe fro the bone
But I sawe he hynge nat there alone
For Cum iniquis deputatus est
Nat lyke a man/but lyke a leprous beest

A blynde knight men called Longias
With a speare approched vnto my sourrayne
Launsyng his syde ful pytously alas
That his precious herte he claue in twayne
The purple bloode ese fro the herties vayne
Downe rayned right faste/in most ruful wyse
With chrystal water brought out of paradyse

When I beheld this wofal passyon
I wote nat how/by sodayne auenture
My herte was persed with very compassyon
That in me remayned no lyse of nature
Stroken of dethe I felte without measure
My dethes wounde I raught/ with wo opprest
And brought to poynt as my herte shuld brest

The wounde/herte/and blood of my darlyng
Shal neuer slyde fro my remenal
The bytter paynes also of tourmentyng
Within my soule be grauen principal
The speare alas/that was so sharpe withal
So thrilled my herte/as to my felyng
That body and soule were at departyng

As sone as I might I releued vp agayne
My brethe I conde nat very wel restore
Felyng my sense drowned in so great payne
Both body & soule me thought were al to tore
Vyolent salles greued me right sore
I wepte/ I bledde/ & with my selfe I fared
As one that for his lyfe nothyng had cared

I lokyng vp to that ruful Roode
Sawe first the vysage pale of that figure
But so pytous a syght spotted with bloode
Sawe neuer yet no lyuyng creature
So it exceded the boundes of measure
That manes mynde/ with al his wyttes fyue
To nothyng ables/that payne for to discryue

Than gan I there myne armes to vnbrace
Vp lyftyng my handes ful mournyngly
I fyghed and fore fobbed in that place
Bothe heuen & erth might haue herde me crye
Wepyng/and fayd alas inceſſauntly
Ah my ſwete herte/my goſtly paramour
Alas I may nat thy body ſocour

O bleſſed lorde/how we feirſe and how we cruel
Theſe curſed wightes now we hath the ſlayne
Kerruyng alas thy body euerydel
Wonde within wonde/ful bytter is thy payne
Now we wolde that I might to the attayne
To nayle my body faſt vnto thy tree
So that of this payne thou might go free

I can nat reporte ne make no reherſayle
Of my demenyng/with the circumſtaunce
But wel I wote the ſpeare with euery nayle
Thirled my ſoule by inwarde reſemblaunce
Whiche neuer ſhal out of my remembraunce
Duryng my lyfe it wol cauſe me to wayle
As ofte as I remembre that batayle

Ah ye iewes/worſe than dogges rabyate
What moued you thus cruelly him to aray
He neuer diſpleaſed you nor cauſed debate
your loue and true hertes he coueyted aye
He preched/he teched/he ſhewed ỳ right waye
Wherfore ye lyke tyrantes wode & waywarde
Now haue him thus ſlayne for his reward

Ye ought to haue remembred one thyng ſpecial
His fauour/his grace/ and his magnyfycence
He was your prince boune/ and lorde ouer al
How we be it ye bare him in ſmal reuerence
He was ful meke in ſuffryng your offence
Neuertheles ye deuoured him with one aſſent
As hungry wolues dothe the ſambe innocent

Where was your pyte/o people mercyleſſe
Armyng your ſelfe with falſhed and treaſon
Vp my lorde ye haue ſhewed your woodneſſe
Lyke no men/but berſtes without reaſon
your malyce he ſuffred al for the ſeaſon
your payne wol come/thynke it nat to ſlacke
Man without mercy of mercy ſhal lacke

O ye traytours & maintaynere of madneſſe
Vnto your folly I aſcribe al my payne
ye haue me pepined of ioye and gladneſſe
So dealyng with my lorde and ſouerayne
Nothyng ſhulde I nede thus to complayne
If he had lyued in peace and tranquillyte
Whom ye haue ſlayne through your iniquite

Farwel your nobleneſſe ỳ ſtemme dyd rayne
Farwel your worſhyp/glorie and fame
Here after to lyue in hate and diſdayne
Warnayle ye nat/for your treſpas & blame
Vnto ſhame is turned al your good name
Vpon you now wol wonder euery nacion
As people of moſte vyle reputacion

Theſe wicked wretches/ theſe hounder of hel
As I haue tolde playne here in this ſentence
Were nat content my derre lorde thus to quel
But yet they muſte embeſyle his preſence
As I perceyue by couert violence
They haue him conueyed to my diſpleſure
For here is laſte but naked ſepulture

Wherfore of truthe and right/ful iugement
That their malyce agayne may be acquyted
After my verdyte and auyſement
Of falſe murder they ſhal be endyted
Of theefte alſo/whiche ſhal nat be reſpyted
And in al haſte they ſhal be hanged & drawe
I wol my ſelfe plede this cauſe in the lawe

Alas if I with true attendaunce
Had ſtyl abyden with my lordes corſe
And kept it ſtyl with trewe perſeueraunce
Than had nat befal this wofu[l] deuorſe
But as for my payne welcome and no force
This ſhal be my ſonge where ſo euer I go
Departyng is grounde of al my wo

I ſe right wel now we in my payne ſmarte
There is no wounde of ſo grieuous doloure
As is the wounde of my careful herte
Sythe I haue loſte thus my paramour
Al ſwetneſſe is tourned in to ſoure
Wythe to my herte nothyng may counfort
But he that bearyth therof bothe locke & key

The

The ioye excellent of blyssed paradyse
Wayte me alas in no wyse recomforte
Songes of angel nothyng may me suffyse
As in myne herte no we to make disporte
Al I refuse/but that I mught resorte
Unto my lorde/the wel of goodyhed
For whose longyng I trowe I shalbe derd

Wyne eyen thayne without Varyaunce
Shal neuer cease/I promyse faithfully
There to wepe with great abundaunce
Bytter teares renuyng incessauntly
The whiche teares medled ful pitously
With the very blode euer shal renne also
Oppressyng in myne herte the grenous wo

Of paynful labour and tourment corporal
I make there of none exceptyons
Paynes of hel I wol passe ouer al
Wy lorde to fynde in myne affections
So great to him is my detestations
A thousande tymes martred wolde I be
His blyssed body ones if I might se

Worldly fode and sustenaunce I despise none
Suche lyuyng as I fynde/suche wol I take
Rotes that growen on the craggy stone
Shal me suffyse with water of the lake
Than thus may I say for my lordes sake
(Fuerunt mihi lachryme me)
(In deserto panes die ac nocte)

About this worlde so large in al compace
I shal nat spare to renne my lyse durynge
Wy sete also shal nat rest in one place
Tyl of my lorde I may here some tydynge
For whose absence my hides no we I wrynge
To thynke on him/cease shal neuer my mynd
O gentyl Jesu where shal I the fynde

Wy body to clothe it maketh no force
A mournyng mantel shalde sufficient
The grenous woundes of his pytous corse
Shalde to me a ful royal garnement
He departed thus/I am best content
His crosse with nayles and scourges withal
Shalbe my thought and payne special

Jerusalem wol I serche place fro place
Spon/the Vale of Josophath also
And if I fynde him nat in al this space
By mount Olyuet to Bethany wol I go
These wayes wol I wander and many mo
Nazareth/Bethleem/Mountana/Jude
No trauayle shal me payne him for to se

Thus wol I lyue/as I haue here talde
Tyl I may ange longe tyme endure
But I feare dethe is ouer me so holde
That of my purpose I can nat be sure
Wy paynes encrease without measure
For of longe lyse who can say any reason
Al thyng is mortal/and hath but a season

His blyssed face if I might se and fynde
Serche I wolde euery coste and countrey
The fardest parte of Egipt or Inde
Shulde be to me but a lytel iourney
Nowe is he thus gone or taken away
Yf I sholde the ful trouthe and certente
Yet from this care released mught I be

I sythe ful sore/and it is ferre yset
Wyne herte I felt nowe bleden in wardly
The blody teares I may in no wyse let
Suche of my payne I fynde no remedy
I thanke god of al if I nowe dye
His wyl performed I holde me content
Wy soule let him take that hath it me lent

In to wyldernesse I thynke best to go
Sith I can no more tydynges of him here
There may I my lyse lede to and fro
There may I wel/and to no man appere
To towne ne Vyllage wol I come nere
Alone in wooddes/in rockes/and in caues deps
I may al myne owne wyl both wepe & wepe

For longer to endure it is intollerable
Wy wasul herte is enflamed so huge
That no sorowe me to myne is comparable
Sythe of my mynde I fynde no refuge
Yet I him requyre as rightful iuge
To bereaue fro me the inwarde sorowe
Lest I synne not to the neyte maye be

Sythe

Within myne herte is impressed ful sore
His royal forme/his shappe/his semelynesse
His porte/his chere/his goodnesse euermore
His noble persone with al gentylnesse
He is the welle of al parfytnesse
The very redemer of al mankynde
Him love I best/with hert/ soule and mynde

In his absence my paynes ful bytter be
Right wel I maye it fele nowe inwardly
No wonder is though they hurte or slee me
They cause me to crye so rewfully
Myne herte oppressed is so wonderfully
Onely for him/ whiche is so bought of blee
Alas I trowe I shal him neuer se

Wy love is translate ful farre in exile
Wy myrthe is chaunged in to paynes colde
Wy lyfe I thynke endureth but a whyle
Anguysshe and payne is that I beholde
Wherfore my handes thus I wringe & folde
In to this graue I lobe/I cal/I pray
Dethe remayneth/and lyfe is borne away

Now must I walke and wander here & there
God wote to what partes I shalme dresse
With quakyng herte/ wepyng many a tere
To seke out my love and al my swetnesse
I wolde he wyst what mortal heuynesse
About myne herte raueth more and more
Than wolde he nat kepe pyte long in store

Without him I may nat long endure
His love so sore worketh within my brest
And euer I wepe before this sepulture
Sighyng ful sore/ as myne hert shulde brest
Duryng my lyfe I shal optayne no rest
But mourne and wepe/ where that euer I go
Makyng complaynt of al my mortal wo

Fast I crye/ but there is no audyence
Wy cōmyng hider was him for to please
Wy soule oppreste is here with his absence
Alas he lyst nat to sette myne hert in ease
Wherfore to payne my sesse withal disease
I shal nat spare tyl he take me to grace
Or els shal I sterue here in this place

Ones if I might with him speke
It were al my love/ with parfyte pleasaunce
So that I myght to him myne hert breke
I shulde anone dewyde al my grenaunce
For he is the clyffe of very recreaunce
But nowe alas/ I can nothyng do so
For in stede of love naught haue I but wo

His noble corse within myne hertes rote
Depe is graued/ whiche shal neuer slake
Nowe is he gone/ to what place I ne wote
I mourne/ I wepe/ and al is for his sake
Sithe he is paste/ here a bowe I make
With hertily prompyse/ & therto I me bynde
Neuer to craze tyl I may him fynde

Vnto his mother I thynke for to go
Of her haply some comforte may I take
But one thyng yet me feareth and no mo
Yf I any mention of him make
Of my wordes she wolde trymble and quake
And who coude her blame/ she hauig but one
The son borne away/ the mother wel mone

Sore wes many hath she suffred trewly
Sith that she first conceyued him and bare
And seuyn thynges there be most specially
That dreadeth her hert in sore we and care
Yet lo/ in no wyse may they compare
With this one nowe/ the whiche if she knewe
She wolde her paynes entrichone renewe

Great was her sore we by mennes seyeng
Whan in the temple Symeon Justus
Shewyng to her/ these wordes prophesying
(Tuam animam pertransibit gladius)
Also whan Herode that tyraunt furious
Her childe pursued in euery place
For his lyfe went neither mercy ne grace

She mourned whan she knewe him gone
Ful long she sought or she him founde apeire
Whan he went to dethe his crosse him upon
It was to her sight a rewful payne
Whan he hong theron/ betwene theues twayn
And the speare unto his hert thrust right
She swouned/ and to the grounde there pight

Whan

When deed and bledy in hir lappe lay
His blessed body/bothe handes & fete al tras
She cryed out and sayde/ no we were wo
Thus araydo was neuer may before
When hastes was made his body to be bour
Vnto his sepulture here to remayne
Vnnethes for wo she conde her sustayne

Whersore her to se I dare nat presume
Fro her presence I wol my selfe restrayne
Yet had I leuer to dye and consume
Than hir mother should haue any more payn
Neuertheless her sonne wolde I se ful fayne
His presence was very sope and swetnesse
His absence is but sore we and heuynesse

There is no more/sithe I may him nat mete
Whom I desyre aboue al other thyng
Nedes I must take the soure with the swete
For of hir noble corse I here no tydyng
Ful ofte I crye/ and my handes wryng
Wyne herte alas/ relenteth al in payne
Whiche wol brast bothe sene we and vayne

Alas how we vnhappy was this woful houre
Wherin is thus myspended my seruyce
For myne entente and eke my treweste labour
To myne effecte may come in any wyse
Alas I thynke if he do me dyspise
And lyst nat to take my symple obseruaunce
There is no more/ but dethe is my penaunce

I haue him called/ Sed non respondet mihi
Wherfore my myrth is tourned to mournyng
O dere lorde/ Quid mali feci tibi
That me to cõforte I fynde non erthly thyng
Alas/ haue compassyon of my cryeng
Ne fro me/ facies tuam abscondas
There is no more/ but Consumere me dis

Within myne hert is grounded thy figure
That al this wouldes sorrybe tourment
May nat it asswage/it is so without measure
It is so brennyng/ it is so feruent
Remembre lorde I haue ben dilygent
Euer the to please onely and no mo
Wyne herte is with the where soeuer I go

Therfore my dere darlyng/ Trahe me post te
And lette me nat stande thus desolate
(Quia non est/ qui consoletur me)
Wyne herte for the is disconsolate
My paynes also nothyng me moderate
Nowe if it lyste the to speke with me a lyne
Come in hast/ for my hert a sonder wyl ryue

To the I profer so my poore seruyce
The for to please after myne owne entent
I offre here/ as in deuout sacrifyce
My body replete with pretious oyntment
Wyne eyen twayne/ wepyng suffycient
Wyne herte with angurysshe fulfylled to alas
My soule ese redy for soue about to pas

Naught els haue I the to please or pay
For if myne hert were golde or pretious stone
It shulde be thyne without any delay
With hertely chere thou shuldest haue it anone
Why sufferest thou me than to stande alone
Thou hast I trowe my wepyng in disdayne
Or els thou knowest nat what is my payne

If thou withdrawe thy noble daliaunce
For ought that euer I displeased the
Thou knowest right wel it is but ignoraunce
And of no knowlege for certayntie
If I haue offended lorde forgyue it me
Sadde I am for to make ful repentaunce
Of al thyng that hath ben to thy greuaunce

Wyne herte alas/ swelleth within my brest
So sore oppreste with anguysshe & with payne
That al to perce forsothe it wol burst
But if I se thy blessed corse agayne
For lyse ne dethe I can nat me restrayne
If thou make delay thou mayst be sure
Wyne herte wol lepe in to thes sepulture

Alas

Alas my lorde/why fareſt thou thus with me
Wyth tribulation yet haue in mynde
Where is thy mercy? where is thy pyte?
Whiche euer I truſted in the to fynde
Sothyne thou were to me bothe good & kynde
Lette it pleaſe the my prayer to accept
Whiche with teares I haue here bewept

On me thou oughteſt to haue very routh
Sith for the is al this mournyng
For ſithe I to the aplyghted firſt my trouth
I neuer varyed with diſcordyng
That knoweſt thou beſt myne owne darlyng
Why conſtrayneſt thou me thus to wayle?
Wyth wo forſoth can the nothyng auayle

I haue endured without variaunce
Right as thou knoweſt/ thy louer iuſt & trew
With hert & thought aye/at thyne ordynaunce
Lyke to the ſaphire alwaye in one hewe
I neuer chaunged the for no newe
Why withdraweſt thou my preſence
Sith al my thought is for thyne abſence

With herte entier/ſwete lorde I crye to the
Enclyne thyne eares to my petycioun
And come/ Velociter exaudi me
Remembre myne hertes diſpoſicioun
It maye nat endure in this condicioun
Therfore out of theſe paynes/ Libera me
And where thou arte/ Pone me iuxta te

Lette me beholde/ O Jeſu thy bleſſed face
Thy faire glorious angelyke viſage
Bowe thyne eares to my complaynt/alas
For to conuey me out of this rage
Alas my lorde/take fro me this dōmage
And to my deſyre for mercy condiſcende
For non but thou/may my greuaūce amende

Nowe yet good lorde/I the beſeche and pray
As thou rayſed my brother Lazarous
From dethe to lyfe the fourth day
Came ayen in body and ſoule precious
As great a thyng mayſt thou ſhewe vnto vs
Of thy ſelfe/ by power of thy godheed
As thou dyd of him/ chenge my graue dreed

Wyne hert is wounded with thy charite
It brenneth/ it flameth maſſyuely
Come my dere lorde/ Ad adiuuandum me
Nowe be nat longe my payne to multiply
Leſt in the meane tyme I departe and dye
In thy grace I put bothe hope and cōfydence
To do as it pleaſeth thy hye magnyfycence

Floodes of dethe/ and tribulacioun
In to my ſoule I fele entred ful depe
Alas that here is no conſolacioun
Euer I wayle/ euer I mourne and wepe
And ſorowe hath wounded myne hert ful depe
O dere loue/ no marueyle though I dye
(Sagitte tue infixe ſunt mihi)

Wandryng in this place/ as in wyldernesſe
No comforte haue I/ ne yet aſſurance
Deſolate of ioye/ replete with fayntneſſe
No anſwere receyuyng of myne enquirance
Wyne herte alſo grieued with diſpleſaunce
Wherfore I may ſaye/ O deus deus
(Non eſt dolor ſicut dolor meus)

Wyne hert oppreſſeth/ Quod dilexi multum
I may nat endure though I wolde fayne
For nowe/ Solum ſupereſt ſepulchrum
I knowe it right wel by my huge payne
Thus for loue I may nat lyue ſuſtayne
But o god/ I muſe what ayleth the
(Quod ſic repente precipitas me)

Alas/ I ſe it wyl none otherwyſe be
Nowe muſt I take my leaue for euermore
This bytter payne hath almoſt diſcomfyte me
Wy loues corſe I cary in no wyſe reſiſte
Alas to thee wo that euer I was borne
Here at his tombe nowe muſte I dye & ſtarue
Dethe is aboute my herte for to carue

Wy teſtament I wolde begyn to make
To god the father/my ſoule I cōmende
To Jeſu my loue/that dyed for my ſake
Wy herte and al/bothe I gyue and ſende
In whoſe loue my lyfe maketh an ende
Wy body alſo to this monument
I here bequeth/bothe boye and ornament

Of al

Of al my wyttes/ so wolde I make the last
Right in this place within this sepulture
I wol be buryed whan I am deed and past
And vpon my graue I wol haue this scripture
Here within restith a goostly creature (re
Chaste trewe louer/ Mary Magdalayne
Whose hert for loue/ brake in peces twayne

Ye vertuous women/ tender of nature
Ful of pyte and of compassyoun
Resorte I pray you/ vnto my sepulture
To synge my dirige with great deuotioun
Shewe your charite in this condicioun
Dying with pyte/ and let your hertes wepe
Remembring I am deed and layde to slepe

Than whan ye begyn to parte me fro
And ended haue your mournyng obseruaunce
Remembre where so euer that ye go
Alway to seeche and make due enqueraunce
After my loue/ myne hertes sustenaunce
In euery toune and in euery vyllage
Yf ye maye here of this noble ymage

And if it happe by any grace at lasie
That ye my trewe loue fynde in any cost
Say that his Magdaleyne is deed and past
For his pure loue hath yelded vp the goost
Say that of al thyng I loued him most
And that I might nat this dethe eschewe
Thy paynes so sore dyde euer renewe

And in tokeny of loue perpetual
Whan I am buryed in this place present
Take out myne hert/ the very rote and al
And close it within this boxe of oyntment
To my dere loue make therof a present
Kneelyng do wne with wordes lamentable
Do your message/ spede sayre and tretable

Say that to him my selfe I cōmende
A thousande tymes with hertes so fres
Thus poore to hym say to him I sende
Prayeth his goodnesse to take it in gre
It is his owne of right/ it is his fee
Whiche he asked/ whan he sayd long before
Gyue me thy herte/ and I desyre no more

A due my lorde/ my loue so faire of face
A due my turtel doue so fressh of hue
A due my mythe/ a due al my solace
A due alas/ my saupour lorde Jesu
A due the gentylleste that euer I knewe
A due my moste excellent paramour
Fayrer than rose/ sweter than sylly flour

A due my hope of al plesure eternal
My lyfe/ my welth/ and my prosperite
Myne herte of golde/ my perele oriental
Myne adamant of parfyte charite
My chefe refuge and my felycite
My comforte/ and al my recreatioun
Farwel my perpetual saluatioun

Farewel myne emperour celestyal
Moste beautyful prince of al mankynde
A due my lorde/ of herte most lyberal
Farwel my sweteste/ bothe soule and myndc
So louyng a spouse shal I neuer fynde
A due my souerayne/ and very gentylman
Farewel dere herte/ as hertely as I can

Thy wordes eloquent flowyng in swetnesse
Shal no more alas/ my mynde reconforte
Wherfore my lyfe must ende in bytternesse
For in this worlde shal I neuer resorte
To the/ whiche was myne heuenly disporte
Ye alas it wol none other be
Nowe farwel the grounde of al dignite

A due the fayreste that euer was borne
Alas I may nat se your blessed face
Nowe welaway that I shal se no more
Thy blessed visage/ so replete with grace
Wherin is pynted my parfyte solace
A due myne hertes roote and al for euer
Nowe farewel/ I must from the disseuer

My soule for angwysshe is nowe ful thursty
I faynt right sore for heynesse
My lorde/ my spouse: Cur me derelequisti
Sith I for the suffre al this distresse
What causeth the to serue thus mercyelesse
Sith it the pleseth of me to make an ende
(In manus tuas) my spirite I cōmende.

Finis.

The Remedy of loue.

SEyng the manyfolde inconuenyence
Fallyng by vnbridled prosperite
Whiche is not tempred with moral prudence
Nothyng more welthy than youthes frele
Moued I am/ bothe of right and enuye
To youthes wele/ somwhat to wute
Wherby he may hym selfe safe kondyte

First I note/ as thyng moste noyous
Vnto youthe a greuous malady
Amonge vs called loue enombrious
Dezzyng ponge people straungely
Ofte by force causeth hem to dye
Age is eke tormented by loue
Dyuerth the gyrdle/ and not aboue

Wherfore this werke/ which is right laborous
For age me nede nat my honde to take
To youthe me oweth to be obsequious
Nowe I begyn thus to worke for his sake
Whiche may the feruence of loue aslake
To the louer/ as a mitigatyue
To hym that is none a preseruatyue

That mighty lorde whiche me gouerneth
Youthe I meane/ measure if I pere
In euery mater whiche hym concerneth
Furst as is behouefull/ I wol aske grace
And forth withal in this same place
Er I begyn/ I wol deuote and saye
These fewe wordes/ and hym of helpe praye

Flouryng youth/ whiche haste auauntage
In strength of body in luste and beaute
Also a prerellyng haste about age
In many a synguler commodite
Howe be it one thyng he hath beyonde the
To thy most profyte and greteste auayle
Whiche shuld the rebuke/ I meane sad counsaile

And yet good lorde/ of a presumption
I nyl depraue thy mayst and vyse
I put but vnder thy protection
I am thy subiecte/ I weare thy lyuerie
For thou arte grounde of my prosperite
And fresshest flowre of al my garlonde
Thy synguler ayde/ as I wel vnderstande

But as he that oweth his lorde best seruyce
And entyre fayth/ his honour to supporte
Right so I pese/ and in none other wyse
I vse weloge my selfe out of the lesse sorte
Of thy seruauntes/ to our eldres comforte
Dia we sadde counsayle to the if thou lyste
The and thy power/ who may thy resyste

Fye on age/ vnder wordes fewe
And his erronyous opinyon
What spe케st of hym/ whych saith most vntrue
Al youthe to be of yl disposycion
Dampneth he al without exception
And for a colerable auauntage
He sayth in hym reherseth counsayle sage

Wel may sadde counsayle in hym rest
But yet he bedes hey ferre therfro
He may say with out parisshe preest
Do as I say/ and not as I do
For I my selfe knowe one or two
Wel stryken in age/ for neyghbourhedde
Wol to their neyghbours wyues bedde

He wyl in presence of the ponge may
Her clyppe and kysse/ ye and do more say
To bleare his eye/ thus he saythe thay
O suffer yet olde Wozel to playe
Nowe haue I done that I can or may
Thus he sayth/ her husbonde to quyte
That he nor no man shulde not misdeme

In worde nor dede/ nedeth hym not beware
It is impossyble that he do enuysse
If the ponge may spede/ anon he sayth hope
To rebuke age/ beseemeth the not ywis
Thus his olde face aye his warantise
Al is in hym/ sleyght and subtelte
And ferre from reason I tel the

Take

And shortly age is not aboue me
Age is impotent/and of no efficience
Age vnlusty may not fynde mo slye
Wyles were age without my defence
Bad counsayle sayst grossly how assyrest
Reason is stedfast where that I come
Wherfore in thy sayeng thou arte to blame

Sythe reason to me is rather accompanyed
Than vnto age/which is the enmyey
Of euery lyfe may not to be denyed
And sythe bade counsayle proceedeth of reson
Bad counsayle in me sayst thu chefe mansion
Thus is no nay/but what is the ende
Of this thy suspyon what dost entende

Age to compare vnto thyn excellence
I nyll presume thou so to begynnyst
Pe be not egal/ no we be it experience
Thy auaunt geuth/for she moste certaynly
Thy tenderth what thyng to hym is contrary
And ofte to fore se it/and warely eschewe
Whiche thou neuer assayedst yet nor knewe

Experience maketh a man moste certayne
Of any thyng erthly/ and of necessyte
Bad counsayle traynyth certayne playne
Do serue to mouy thou whereto nede we
But to my purpose/ as thou commaundest me
Shortly myne entent is thus/ and none other
Vnder thy lyenes to counsayle my brother

How we shuldest gyue any counsayle so ponge
Lackyng experience vnto thyne owne sprche
I repete me/I wote wel as for thy tonge
Wyl serue the ryght wel/ but thou for to teche
I doute me lest that thy wytte wel not reche
Vnto a experience thou sayst he not connyst
How shuldest thou teache wel vnsyghte

Experience wytnessyth that god wyl oft shyfte
Fro the syre wyseb mony/ e sheus it to a childe
To him I meane that of his owne wytte
Presumyth most/ but ye beholde and mysse
Opynyon/ I confesse verily for to lyche
Which is myne owne parte/ thus I knowe wel
And part of experience/ which I haue somwel

Wel than/ if it be so thou knowest some
Where vnto thy doctryne be not equalle
I wol the suppose/ so be thou not spare
Thyngis ought/ though he stele as gnosse
To myne age/ counsayle herin were vnwosse
Boldely begyn/ go forthe to thy purpose
Feare not sythe thou arte of suche sadnesse

Grant mercy lorde sythe it the lyke lyke
To hyerken me/ no we I wol and dare boldely
Assaile my purpose/ with scriptures auctorysed
Thy werke wel I grounde/ vnderset/ e fortefye
Aspire my begynnyng/ o thou woode fury
Alecto with thy sustiers/ and in especyal
To the mother of vengeyne Juno I cal.

¶ Explicit prologus.

This werke who so shal se or rede
Of any vncongruite do me not inperche
Dubytatyly behoueth me first to procede
In deduction therof/ in maner as the seche
His parentes sickenesse o with first for to seche
The which gnoweth/ medecyne he shuld apply
And shortly as he can/ than shape a remedy

Right so by counsayle/ wyllyng the to eyborte
O pong man ryperous/ which doth abounde
In thy floures of lustes belongeth on the sorte
The first to consyder what is vertus grounde
Of thy mischefe/ which is playnly founde
Woman forced with fraude and decayte
To thy confusyon moste affectyue hayte.

Flye the wilwoman/ leste she the discayue
Thus saith Salomon/ which taught man fully
The falsheed of women/ I bid dayly to receyue
The hyppes of a strumpet hey swetter than hony
Her throte he sayth soupled with oyle of flattery
How we be it the ende and effecte of al
Dytter as wormwode or gal

Flye the wilwoman/ leste she the discayue
Ware the strangers blande eloquence
Strange I cal her that is not thy wyfe
Of her beaute haue no concupiscence
Her countenaunce/ pitturedyng ignorance
Retayne her figure and eye for euermore
Holden for feare/ they be dysceyuable

Dalyd. Be

To ayn exfampfe what woning be
In their fignes and countenaunce fhortly
I wol fhewe the how louers thre
Loued one woman right entierly
Eche of them knewe others malady
Wherfore was al their dayly labour
Who coude approche next in his fauour

At fondrie feafons/as fortune requyreth
Generally they came to fe her welfare
But onys it hapened/loue them fo fpreth
To fe their lady they al wolde not fpare
Of others comyng none of them were ware
Tyl al they mette/ where as they in plare
Of her lady fawe the defyred face

To fupper fette/ful fmally they ete
Ful fobre and demure in countenaunce
For there taryed none of hem for any mete
But on his lady to gyue attendaunce
And in fecrete wyfe fome fignyfyaunce
Of loue to haue/ whiche parfeyuyng fhe
Ertely executed thus her properte

In due feafon/as fhe alway afpyed
Euery thyng to execute conuenyently
Her one louer firft frendly fhe eyed
The fecronde fhe offred the cuppe curteffy
The thirde fhe gaue to hem fecretly
Underneth the borde fhe trade on his fote
Through his entrayles tyfled the herte rote

By your leue/ might I here aske a queftyon
Of you my mayfters that fewe loues trace
To you lyfely belongeth the folucyon
Whiche of thefe thre ftode nowe in grace
Directly to anfwere ye wolde aske longe fpace
The mater is doutful and oppnable
To aduertayne you I wol my felfe enable

Of the fourfoyd thre my felfe was one
No man can anfwere better than I
Herkety of Be byloued was there none
But Walter paffe we barre al by and by
Whiche at laft I my felfe gan afpye
And fpake as me thought/ thus I left ȳ bafter
O thoughtful herte/ gwat lufty grete haute

Hence fro me hence/ that me for to endyte
Halpe aye here afore/ o ye muftes nyne
Whylom ye were wont to be myn ayde a fyghte
Myn penne to dyrecte/ my ftayne to enlumyne
No lenger alas may I fewe your doctryne
The freffh lufty matere/ that I wont to make
Haue ben here afore/ I vtterly forfake

Come hyther thou Hermes/ and ye futtes al
Which fet ben vnder Ioue/ nygh the nether pole
Where Pluto regneth/ o ȳng infernal
Sende out thyn arppes/ fende anguiffh y bole
Myfery and wo/ fcarne ye me not fole
Of right be preſent muft payne y eſe turment
The pale dethe refemeth not to be abſent

To me no we I cal al this lothfome forte
Thy paynes tenereaft/ my fore wes to augment
For worthy I am to be bare of al comforte
Thus fythe I haue conſumed and mifpent
Not onely my bayes/ but my fyrcfolde talent
That my lord cõpyted me/ I can not recorde
I may not to derely abye my negligẽce (pẽce

By the pathe of penaunce yet wol I reuerte
To the welle of grace/ mercy there to fetche
Difpyteſt not god the meke contryte herte
Of the roche to wylde/ alas ȳ I wolde not retche
And yet as it not late in the feronde wretche
Mercy fhal I purchace by inceſſaunt crying
The mercyes of our lorde cure fhal I fynge

Wal wel mayſte thou wayle wicked woman
That thou fhuldeſt deſceyue thine owne entente
And in recompence of my fynne/ fo as I can
To al men wol I make a leue this mornynge
In fhewing parte of thy falſhed to mayn vnkynde
For al were to moche/ I can not wel I wote
The cauſe fhewerth plainly he that thus wrote

If al the erthe were parchement ſcrible fle
Euery fee the hande/ and al the water blake
Were ynked and pupyrus and euery man a wryter
Al mother naturis/ my dedes to fpeke
Euery man beyng a perfyte fcribe y ſpeke
The mayſtreſſe yet and beſeyde of cunnyng
Coude not be ſhewed by the meryte of pleynyng

I ſhe

I flye al odyous resemblaunces
The eyecle blonde and women I myght
Wherup man is enfused to mischaunce
Or a flyghyng rose that fayre as ay sight
Or deedly empoysen/ lyke the sugre whyte
Whiche by his swetnesse causeth many to taste
And sodaunly sleeth & bringeth hym to his laste

It is not my maner to vse suche langage
But this my doctryne/as I may lawfully
I wol holy grounde with auctoryte sage
Wyllyng bothe wyse men/and bestue eche ly
Wyne and women vn to apostasy
Cause wyse men to fal/what is that to say
Of wyse doune cause them to forget the way

Wherfore the wyse may bothe the aduyse
In whose wordes can be founde no leasyng
With the straunger to sytte in no wyse
Whiche is not thy wyfe/ fal not in dyspyng
With her/ but ieware eke of her kyssyng
Kepe with her in wyne no aserracion
Lest that thyne herte fal by inclynacion

May a man thynkest hyde and safe lay
Fyre in his bosom/ without empayrement
And vnwyng of his clothes/ or whether he may
Walke on hotte coles/ his fete not bernte
As who sayth nay/and wherby is ment
This foresayd prouerbe and symylitude
But that thou tryde the playnly to denude

From the flatterers forgetyng her gyde
The gyde of her youth/I meane shamfastnes
Whiche shulde cause her maydenhed to abyde
Her goddes beheste eke she ful recheleste
Not retchyng/ contempteth it to forgetfulnesse
Neyther god ne shame in her hauyng place
Neyther muste suche a woman sacke grace

And al that neygh her in way of syn
To turne of grace that sacke the influence
The pathes of vice no more to entre in
Wherfore first fonde the with sapience
Remembryng god/ and after with prudence
To thyne owne wyfe that they the repe
Vnto thyne herte/ leste her wordes crepe

In his boke where I take my moste grounde
And in his prouerbes sayth Salomon
Telleth a tale/ whiche is playnly founde
In the syxth chapeter/ whether ay erre non
Or mesely feyned to our instruction
Let clerkes determyne/ but this am I sure
Whether yfe thyng I haue had in vre

At my wyndowe sayethe he I loked out
Fayre ponge people/ where I sawe many
Amonge hem al/ as I loked aboute
To a ponge man fortuned I sent myn eye
Estraunged from his myndе it was sykely
By the strete at a corner/ nyghe his owne house
He went aboute with eye right curyous

Whan that the day his light gan withdrawe
And the nyght approched in the twylyght
Howe a woman came and met hym I sawe
Talkyng with hym vnder shade of the nyght
Nowe blessed be god (quod she) of his myght
Whiche hath fulfylled myne hertes desyre
Aslaked my paynes/ whiche were hote as fyre

And yet myne auctour/ as it is wyst
To telle we/ I muste tel her arayment
She was ful nyce/ soules lyke to spyl
As nyce in countenaunce yet as in garment
For iangelyng she was of test impayrment
Wandrunge fyxt in no place she stode
But restelesse now we and now we out she rode

Nowe in the house/ nowe in the strete
Nowe at a corner she flondeth in awayte
Incessauntly besy her praye for to gete
To bring to the lure whom she dothe lapte
Nowe where I seyde/ vnto my mater straxte
I wol turne agayne/ howe she hym mette
Swetely kyssed/ and frendely hym gratte

With wordes of curtesye many and dyuerse
Right as in parte I haue before tolde
Nowe as I cannot I purpose to reherse
Howe she flatteryng sayd with besoyne bolde
I haue made bowes/ offrynges many folde
For thy sake/ O myn herte/ a my fayre dere
This day I thanke god al perfourned were

Therfore I came out/ and made thus aferte
Very diligens your welfare to se
Nowe I haue sene you/ plesed is myn herte
In faythe shal none haue my lone but ye
As trewe as I any to you be to me
I pray you hertely dere herte come home
No man shulde be to me so welcome

And in good faythe/ the sothe for to say
Your compunge to me ranne in my thought
Harbe in your eare/ my bedde fresshe and gay
I haue behanged with tapettes newe bought
From Egypte/ & from ferre coūtrees brought
Steyned with many a lusty fresshe hue
Excedyng golde or iasper in value

My chambre is strowed with myrre & ensence
With sote sauoring aloes/ & with synamome
Breathyng an aromatyke redolence
Surmountyng olybane/ in any mans dome
Ye shal bytwene my brestes rest if ye come
Let vs haue our desyred hallyng
For we may safe be tyl in the mornyng

Myn husbonde is not at home/ he is went
Forthe in his iourney/ a ferre way hence
A bagge with money he hath with him hent
As him thought nedeful for his expence
Unto my worde gyue faythe and credence
Nowe is the moone ponge/ & of lyght dulle
Ere he come home it wol be at the fulle

Thus crastely hath she him besette
With her lyme roddes/ panter/ and snare
The sely soule caught in her nette
Of her sugred mouthe/ alas nothyng ware
Thus is he lefte graceles and bare
Of helpe/ comforte/ and goostly socour
And furthermore/ as saythe myne auctour

As a beest ledde to his dethe dothe pante
This ponge man foleweth her in ỹ stounde
And as a wanton lambe ful ignorante
Nowe he is pulled and drawen to be bounde
Unto the tyme he hath his dethes woundē
And lyke a byrde that hasteth to the gryme
Not knowyng the peryl of his lyfe therin

Now gentle soone sayth Salomon take hede
Wyth wordes in thy brest depe and made faste
Let her not thy mynde in her wayes mislede
Be not discerued/ lese not thy taste
Many hath she wounded/ many do wene caste
Many stronge by her hath lefte their brethe
Her wayes/ wayes of hel ledyng to dethe

And in this lytel naration precident
The womans manyfolde gyle I attende
The ponge man alas howe she hath shent
Discerued her husbāde/ her owne next frende
In these bothe her god she dothe offende
To brebe her spousayle/ to her is of no weight
Furdermore to shewe womans craft & sleight

A woman at her doze sate on a stal
To se folke passe by stretes of the cyte
With eye & countenaunce ebe she gan cal
If there be any prety one/ come nereto me
Come hyther ye pygges nye/ ye lytel babe
At laste she sayd to a ponge man hertelesse
Of her discrete vnware and defenceles

Moche swetter she sayth/ & more acceptable
Is drinke whan it is stolen pruely
Than whan it is taken in fourme and stable
Breed hyd and gotten ieoperdously
Muste nedes be swete/ and semblably
Venyson stolne is aye the swetter
The ferther the narower sette the better

And whom this wōmā saith Salomon festes
The pong mā woteth not whom she doth fede
Of the derke depenesse of hel ben her gestes
Beware ponge man therfore I the rede
And howe be it chefely for thy good spede
This werke to conspyle/ I haue take charge
I muste of pyte my charyte enlarge

With the sely man whiche is thus begyled
Her husbande I meane/ I wol wepe & wayle
His papneful infortune/ wherby trupled
Lauseles he is/ neuer to conuayle
Euery man ponge and olde wol him assayle
With wordes of occasyon/ with the lothe names
And alas good folke/ he nothyng to blame

But

But ſhe that coude ſo yl do and wolde
Here be the blame for her demerytes
And leaue that oppꝛobꝛious name colde
To apꝛopꝛie to him as hy diſpyte
Rauiſhe yet wil wolde if we myght
Of this worde the trewe ortographye
The very deſcrit and ethymology

The wel and grounde of the firſt enuencion
To ſhowe the ortographye we muſt deryue
Whiche is colde and colde/in compoſicion
By reaſon/as myght as I can contryue
I hay howe it is written we ſhowe beſyde
But yet forthy what reaſon and grounde
Was it of theſe to wordes compounde

As of one cauſe to gyue verye iugement
Themyology let be firſt beholde
Ethe letter ay hole worde dothe repꝛeſent
As C/ put for colde/ and D/ for olde
R/ is for ſhame/thus dyuers men holde
The firſt parte of this name we haue founde
Let vs ethymologyſe the ſeconde

As the firſt fynder meute I am ſure
C/ for caſtel/ for o/ I we haue D
L/ for lende/ D/ for demeanure
The craſte of the enuentour ye may ſe ſo
Howe one name ſignyfyeth perſons two
A colde olde ſhame/colde him ſelfe wenyng
And ele a caſtel of lende demeanyng

The ſeconde cauſe of thympoſicion
Of this forſayd name was ielouſye
To be ielouſe is greateſt occaſyon
To be colde/that men can eſpye
And though the paſſyon be very yuel
And of contynuel tarryance and hete
The patient aye ſuffreth colde on hys fete

And who that is ielous/and aye in a drede
Be ful of melancoly and gaſly yre
His wyues noſe if ſhe myſſe trede
He wol cutte of/ye and conſpyre
His dethe who that wol her deſpyre
Whilſt ſhe pꝛetteryuyng diaſterth hys gal
And drawe him great wodeneſſe bothe fal

As ſone as ſhe hath hurte him that hurte
Nowe is he tame that was ſo ramagyous
Heſelfe ſytteth he downe and taſteth his lotte
Layde bey nowe his loſtes ſo furyous
And he but late as a corſe bataylous
Hote in his quarel/to auenge him bolde
Nowe is he called bothe cole and colde

This ſayeng/to al curteſy diſſonante
Whiche ſemeth that it of malyce grewe
In this rude treatyſe I wol not plante
As parcel therof/but onely to ſhewe
The opanyon of the talcatyſe ſhewe
Whiche in yl ſayeng is euer mery
No man as I therof ſo wery

But I as parcel of this my boke
Wol graſſe in ſome ſadde counſayle wherby
The wonded man/ if he daigne to loke
In it/the better ſhal mowe him gye
And prouyde for his ſayd infortunye
Whiche as I haue ſayd/ with him complayne
I wol/as partiner of his great payne

As moſte expedient to his wele
I wolde al ieſouſy were abiecte
If he be ielous/that he it concele
And in his labour be circumſpecte
To knowe her wayes/if they ſeme ſuſpecte
And not for to breke/for one worde broken
She wol not myſſe but ſhe wol be wroken

Forbyd her not/ that thou noldeſt haue done
For loke what thyng ſhe is forbode
To that of al thynges ſhe is moſte prone
Namely if it be yl and no good
Yf it be executed ſhe is nygh woode
Suche is woman/and ſuche is her feate
Her craſte by craſte/ labour to defeate

If thou herafter/nowe a ſyngle man
Shuldeſt be ielous if thou haddeſt a wyfe
Wedde not but if thou can truſt woman
For elſe ſhuldeſt lede a careful lyfe
That thou moſte lotheſt ſhulde be ful ryfe
Yet I nyl gayneſay matrymony
Dut Helias eſt mulier quam vir.

That is to say/better is in wedlocke
A wyfe to take/as the churche dothe kenne
Than to be vnder the flesshes yoke
In fleshly lust alway for to brenne
But as I sayd/for al ielous men
So they lyue chaste/I holde it lasse yl
That they wedde not/than them selfe spyl

The syngle man whiche is yet to wedde
And not the wedded man/thus I rede
To warne him no we he is to sarre spedde
It is to late him for to forbede
But let him take as for his owne nede
Suche counsayle as is him before tolde
These wordes folowyng eke she beholde

Thy water to kepe the wyse man dothe teche
That thou in no wyse let it haue issue
At a narowe ryste/way it wol seche
And semblably the woman vntrewe
To gyue her fre walke in al wyse eschewe
If she at large/not at thyn hande walke
She wol the shame/thou shalt it not balke

Wedded or syngle/thus sayth the wyse man
Her that bothe day and nyght euermore
Lythe in thy bosome/wyfe or yet lemman
Loue not to hote/leste thou repent sore
Leste she the bring in to some yl lore
Thy wyfe not to loue yet I nyl supporte
But that thou dote not/thus I the exhorte

Lo if thou loue her/loue eke thyne honeste
Be she not ydel/for what wol betyde
If she sette ydle/of very necessyte
Her mynde wol serche ferre and eke wyde
Namely if she be not accompanyde
Howe accompanyed/not with yonge men
But with maydens I meane or women

Mayden seruauntes be right conuenyent
In house to helpe to do her seruyce
In whom she may vse her commaundement
In the season at her owne deuyce
To teache hem good/yeue her thyne aduyce
To make them huswyues/thus besemeth
May yet refrayne her from ydelnesse

But bydde her not that thou wolte haue do
Of thyne entent that might be letyng
But craftily encourage her therto
By other meanes/as by commendyng
And not to moche/but duely mengyng
Bothe prayse and blame/and in thy reason
First prayse wysely the place and season

Of faythful wyl/and herte ful trewe
Out thynge I cal in to remembraunce
Agayne/ whiche though my wytte be slendre
After my power and suffysaunce
I purpose to make a purueyaunce
Sythe women of nature ben chaungeable
Freale not ware also discernable

Be it that thy wyfe be excellently good
That none be better of disposycion
In processe of tyme she might turne her mode
By some mysse lyuers instygacion
Dyuers men to chose occupacion
Applyen dayly/mynde and eke herte
From her goodnesse women to peruerte

If thou aspye any suspecte person
Draw to thy wyfe/beware in al wyse
To him nor her of thy suspection
Disclose not one worde/though thyn herte agryse
Kyndel no fyre/no smoke wol aryse
Though he be of a corrupte entent
She peraunture is not of assent.

¶ Explicit.

The complaynt of mars & venus.

O Ladeth ye louers in the more we gray
Lo Venus rysen amdg you to wepe and pray
And floures fresshe honour ye this day
For whan ȳ sonne vprist/than wol they spade
But ye louers that lye in any drede
Shyeth leste wicked tonges you aspye
Lo yonde the sonne/the candel of vrlonsye

With

With teares blewe and with a wounded herte
Taketh po' fruc/ & with saint Iohn to bede we
Apeseth sum what of pour sore was smerte
Pyne cometh esie/ & cesse shal pour sore we
The glade night is worthe an hery more we
Sayng Venus pur a soule thus herde I syng
Upon thy day or sonne gan vp springe

Yet sange this soule I rede you al awake
And ye that haue nat chosen in humble wyse
Without repentyng cheseth pour make
yet at the lest/ remembreth pour seruyse
And ye that haue sul chosen as I deuyse
Confermeth it perpetually to dure
And pacientli taketh pour auenture

And for the worshippe of this highe feest
yet wol I in my rudde wyse synge
The sentence of the complaynt at the lest
That wofu[l] Mars made at the departyng
Fro fresshe Venus in a mone wepyng
When Phebus with his fyne tourches rede
Ransaked hath euery louer in his drede

Whylom the thre heuyns lorde a bout
As wel by heuynesshe revolution
As by desette hath wonne Venus his sonq
And she hath take hym in subiection
And as a maistresse taught hym his lesson
Comaundyng hym newer in her seruyse
He were so bolde no louer to dispyse

For she forbade hym iclousy al al
And cruelte and hatse/ and tyrannye
She made hym at her laste so humble & tal
That whan she deigned to cast on hym her eye
He took it for a guerdon to lyue or dye
And thus she stabled hym in her manere
With nothyng/ but with seruyng of her chere

Who reigneth now in blysse but Venus
That hath this worthy knyght in gouernaunce
Who serueth now but Venus & serueth thus
The sayns Venus/ comfort of pacience
Be byne thy seruaunt to perpetuel obeysaunce
And she byneth hym to loue hym for euer
But so be that he suffyse at pleasaunce

Thus be they knyt/ and reigney as I deuyse
Dy lesyng most/ as it fel on a tyde
That by her bothe assent was set a tyme
That Mars shal entre as fast as he may glyde
In to her nexte paleys to abyde (de
Wallyng his course tyl she had hym atake
And he prayed her to haste her for his sake

Than sayd she thus/ myne hertes lady swete
ye knowe wel my myschefe in that place
For syberly tyl that I with you mete
Dy lyfe stante there in auenture and grace
But whan I se the beaute of your face
There is no drede of dethe may do me smerte
For al your lust is ease to myne herte

She hath so great compassyon of her knyght
That dwelleth in solytude tyl she come
For it stode so/ that ylke tyme no wight
Counsayled hym/ ne sayd to hym welcome
That nygh her wyt for sore we was ouercom
Wherfore she spedde as faste in her way
Almost in one daye as he dyd in twaye

The great ioye that was betwixe hem two
When they be mette/ there may no tonge tel
There is no more but vnto bedde they go
And thus in ioye and blysse I lette hem dwel
This worthy Mars that is of knighthode wel
The flowre of fairnesse happeth in his armes
And Venus fysseth Mars the god of armes

Sojourned hath this Mars/ of whiche I rede
In chambre amydde the paleys pourely
A certayne tyme/ tyl hym fel a dreade
Through Phebus that was comen hastely
Within the paleys gates sturdely
With torches in honde/ of whiche y streames brast
On Venus chambre knocked ful fyersh

The chambre there as laye this fresshe quene
Depaynted was with white bores greie
And by the light she knewe that shon so shene
That Phebus came to bring hem tidings gode
This lyely Venus up dreynt in trause mode
Embraceth Mars/ and sayd alas I dye
The torch is cou/ that al this worlde wol seye

Up sterte

Vp sterte Mars/ him lyste nat to slepe
Whan he his lady herde so complayne
But for his nature was nat for to wepe
In stede of teares from his eyen twayne
The fyre sparcles sprongen out for payne
And hente his hauberke that laye him beside
Flye wolde he nauȝt/ ne myght him selfe hyde

He thrioweth on his helme of huge weight
And gyrt him with his swerde/ & in his honde
His mighty speare/ as he was wont to feyght
He shaketh so/ that it almost to wonde
Ful heuy was he to walken ouer londe
He may nat holde with Venus company
But badde her flyen lest Phebus her espy

O wofull Mars alas/ what mayst thou sayn
That in the palays of thy disturbaunce
Arte lefte behynde in paryl to be slayne
And yet there to is double thy penaunce
For she that hath thyne herte in gouernaunce
Is passed halfe the stremes of thyne eyen
That ȳ nere swyft/ wel mayst ȳ wepe & cryen

Nowe flyeth Venus in to Licyrnius tour
With Voyde corse/ for feare of Phebus syght
Alas/ and there hath she no socour
For she ne founde ne sey no maner wight
And eke as there she had but lytel myght
Wherfore her seluen for to hyde and saue
Within the gate she fledde in to a caue

Darke was this caue/ & smoldyng as the hel
Nat but two paas within the pate it stode
A naturel day in derke I lette her dwel
Nowe wol I speke of Mars furious & wode
For sorow we he wolde haue seen his herte blode
Sithe ȳ he might haue done her no company
He ne roughte nȝt a myte for to dye

So feble he weyt for hete and for his wo
That nygh he swelte/ ta might vneth endure
He passeth but a sterre in dayes two
But neuertheles/ for al his heuy armure
He folo weth her that is his lyues cure
For whose departyng he lose greatter yre
Than for al his brennyng in the fyre

After he walketh softely a pace
Complaynyng that it pyte was to here
He sayd/ O lady bught Venus alas
That euer so wyde a compas is my sphere
Alas/ whan shal I mete you herte dere
This twelue dayes of April I endure
Through iclous Phebus this myschaunce

Nowe god helpe sely Venus alone
But as god wolde it happed for to be
That while ȳ weping Venus made her mone
Licyrnius tryngye in his chyuauche
Fro Venus Vulcanus myght his paleys se
And Venus he saluteth/ and maketh cheer
And her recreyueth as his frende ful dere

Mars dwelleth forthe in his aduersyte
Complaynyng euer in her departyng
And what his cõplaynt was remembreth me
And therfore in this lusty moro wnyng
As I best can/ I wol it sayne and syng
And after that I wol my leaue take
And god yeue euery wight ioye of his make.

¶ The complaynt of Mars.

The order of cõplaynt requireth sȳplycyte
That if a wight shal playne pitously
There mote be cause wherfore ȳ men playne
Or men may deme he playneth folysly
And causeles alas that am nat I
Wherfore the grounde & cause of al my payne
So as my troubled wytte may it attayne
I wol reherse/ nat for to haue redresse
But to declare my grounde of heuynesse

The first tyme alas/ that I was wrought
And for certayne effectes hyder brought
By him that formeth eche entellygence
I pane my tre we seruyce and my thought
For euermore/ how we derr I haue it bought
To her that is of so great excellence
That what wight ȳ she weth first her offence
Whan she is wroth and taketh of hym no cure
He may nat longe in ioye of loue endure

This is no fayned mater that I tel
My lady is the very sothe and wel

Of

Of beaute/ lustes/ and gentylesse
Of ryches array/ how we dere men it sel
Of al dysporte in whyche many stondyth wel
Of loue and playe/ and of hertes humblesse
Of formes of instrumentes of al swetnesse
And therto so wel fortuned and the wed
That though ȳ wolde her goodnes in shewed

What wonder is than though that I bescite
My seruyce on suche one that maye me bnette
No wele or wo/ sithe it lyeth in her mygth
Therfore myne herte for euer I to her hette
Ne trewly for my dethe shal I nat lette
To ben her trewest seruant and her knyght
I flatter nat that may wete euery wight
For this day in her seruyce shal I dye
Out grace be/ I se her neuer with eye

To whom shal I playne of my dystresse
Who may me help/ who may my hert redresse
Shal I complayne vnto my lady free
Nay certes/ for she hath suche heynesse
For feare and ese for wo/ that as I gesse
In lytel tyme it wolde her bane be
Out were she fase/ it were no force of me
Alas that euer louers mote endure
For loue so many perylous auenture

For though so be that louers be as trewe
As ony metal that is forged newe
In many a case hem tydeth ofte sorowe
Somtyme her ladies wol nat on hem rewe
Somtyme if that ielousy it knewe
They myght spyghtly lay her heed to borowe
Somtyme enuyous folke with tonges horowe
Depraue hem alas/ whom may they please
Out he be false/ no louer hath his ease

But what auayleth suche a longe sermoun
Of auentures of loue vp and doun
I wol retourne and speke of my payne
The poynt is this of my dystruccioun
Oh right lady/ my saluacioun
Is in affray/ and not to whom to playne
O herte swete/ o lady souerayne
For pure trouthe I ought wel swowne & swelt
Though I myne other harme ne drede nelt

To what fyne made the god that sytte so hye
Beneth hym loue other company
And strayneth folke to loue maugre her heed
And than her ioye for aught I can espye
Ne lasteth nat the twynkelyng of an eye
And some haue neuer ioye tyl they be deed
What meneth this/ what is this mysteryed
Wherto constrayneth he his folke so fast
Thyng to desyre but it shulde last

And though he made a louer longe a thyng
And maketh it seme stedfast and durying
yet putteth he in it suche myssauenture
That rest nys there in his pevpng
And that is wonder that so wyse a kyng
Dothe suche hardnesse to his creature
Thus whether loue breke or elles dure
Algates he that hath with loue to done
Hath ofter wo/ than chaunged is the mone

It semeth he hath to louers enmyte
And lyke a fysshere/ as men may al day se
Dayteth his angle hoke with some pleasaunce
Tyl many a fysshe is wode to that he be
Ceased therwith/ and than at erst hath he
Al his desyre/ and therwith al myschaunce
And though the lyne breke he hath penaunce
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore
That he his wages hath for euermore

The broche of Thebes was of suche fynde
So ful of rubies and of stones of Inde
That euery wight that sette on it an eye
He wende anon to worthe out of his mynde
So sore the beaute wolde his hert bynde
Tyl he it had/ him thought he must dye
And whan that it was his than shulde he drye
Surche wo for drede aye whyle that he it had
That welnygh for the feare he shulde mad

And whan it was fro his possessyon
Than had he double wo and passyon
That he so fayre a iewel hath forgo
Out yet this broche/ as in conclusyon
Was nat the cause of his confusyon
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so
That euery wight ȳ had it shulde haue wo

And

And therfore in the worcher was the fyre
And in the conceptour that was so nyce

So fareth it by louers/ and by me
For though my lady haue so great beaute
That I was made to/ I had get her grace
She was nat cause of myne aduersyte
But he that wrought her/ as mote I thee
That put suche a beaute in her face
That made me coueyten and purchace
Myne owne dethe hym wyte I that I dye
And myne vnwyt that euer I clambe so hye

But to you hardy knightes of renowne
Sithe that ye be of my deuyse owne
Al be I nat worthy to so great a name
yet sayne these clerkes I am your patrone
Therfore ye ought haue some compassyons
Of my disease/ and take it nat a game
The proudest of you may be made ful tame
Wherfore I pray you of your gentylesse
That ye complayne for myne heynesse

And ye my ladies that ben trewe and stable
By way of kynde ye ought to ben able
To haue pyte of folke that ben in payne
Nowe haue ye cause to clothe you in sable
Sithe that your empres the honorable
Is desolate/ wel ought ye to playne
Nowe shulde your holy teares fal and rayne
Alas your honour and your empire
Nygh dred for drede/ ne can her nat chewyse

Complayneth eke ye louers al in fere
For her that with vnfayned humble chere
Was euer redy to do you socour
Complayneth her that euer hath be your dere
Complayneth beaute/ fredome/ and manere
Complayneth her that endeth your labour
Complayneth chefe ensample of al honour
That neuer dyd but gentylnesse
Kepteth therfore in her some kyndnesse.

¶ The complaynt of Venus.

There nys so high cõforte to my plesaunce
Whan that I am in any heynesse
As for to haue layser of remembraunce
Vpon the manhode and the knyghtlynesse
Vpon the trouth/ and on the stedfastnesse
Of hym whose I am al whyle I may laste
There ought to blame me no creature
For euery wight prayseth his gentylesse

In hym is bounte/ wysedom/ & gouernaunce
Wel more than any mannes wyt can gesse
For grace hath wolde so fetously hym enable
That of hys ghthode he is parfyte richesse
Honour honoureth hym for his noblesse
Therto so wel hath fourmed hym nature
That I am his for euer I hym ensure
For euery wight prayseth his gentylesse

And nat withstandyng al his suffysaunce
His gentyl herte is of so great humblesse
To me in worde/ in werke/ and in countenaunce
And me to serue as al his besynesse
That I am sette in very sykernesse
Thus ought I blysse wel myne auenture
Sith that hym lyste me fermyn and honour
For euery wight prayseth his gentylesse

Nowe certes lowe it is right conuenable
That men ful dere abye thy noble thynges
As wake a bedde/ and fastyng at the table
Wepyng to laugh and synge in complaynynges
And dowue to caste vysage and countenaunce
Ofte to chaunge vysage and countenaunce
Play in slepyng/ and dreme at the daunce
Al the reuers of any gladde felyng

Ielousy he hanged by a cable
She wolde al knowe throughe her clyppyng
There dothe no wight nothyng so reasonable
That al nys harme in her ymagynyng
Thus dere abought is lowe in yeuyng
Whiche ofte he yeueth without ordynaunce
As soone we ynough/ and lytel of plesaunce
Al the reuers of any gladde felyng

A lytel tyme his yefte is ogreable
But ful acombrous is the vsyng
For subtel ielousy the vnresonable
Ful ofte tyme causeth displesyng
Thus bey we euer in drede and suffryng

By no

In no ernestynesse languyssheth in penaunce
And haue mad of his mony an harde mistaken
At the request of any gladde seruyng.

But certes soure I saye nat in suche wyse
That for to scape out of your seruyse I wante
For I so longe haue ben in your seruyse
That for to lete of wyll I neuer assente
No force though vlonesse me tourmente
Suffyseth me to se you whan I may
And therfore certes to myne endyng day
To soure hye beste shal me neuer repente

And certes soure whan I me wel auyse
Of any estate that many may deuyse
Than haue ye made me through your fraūchyse
Chefe the beste that euer my erthe went
No me soure wel serue a lode thou neuer slante
And lette the iolous putte it in assaye
That for no payne wol I nat seke nay
To soure hye beste shal I neuer repente

Herto me it ought ynough suffyse
That soure so hyghe a grace you sent
To chose the worthyest in al wyse
And most agreable vnto myne entente
Beleue no ferther myther may me wente
Suche pe haue suffysaunce vnto my paye
Thus wol I ende this complaynyng of this fay
To soure hye beste shal I neuer repente.

¶ Lenuoye.

Pigmeus auengynth this complaynyng in grese
Vnto your excellente hawtgraye
Deserte after my fytel sufficiaunce
For elde that in my spyrite dulleth me
Hath of endytyng al the subtilte
Welnygh forsake out of my remembraūce
And eke to me it is a great penaunce
Suche rymes as longe vsed haue to make
To solowe me wolde be harde the case is
Of Grauesende here I you make i trowe.

¶ Explicit.

¶ Here after followeth the fyfte
ken of Loyaltye.

A Dyeu/ vnto whose commaundement
The gentyl squyrede of goddes ay lyth
And people infernal ben obedyent
And al mortal folke seruen besely
Of the goddesse sonne Cytheres onely
To al tho that to our dete
Ben fauorables/ hertely greteyng sende we

In general we wol that ye knowe
That ladies of honour and of reuerence
And other gentyl women hauen so we
Suche feede of complaynt in our audyence
Of men that do hem outrage and offence
That it our eares greueth for to here
So pytous is the effecte of this matere

Passyng al londes/ on the lytel yle
That cleped is Albion/ they must complayne
They say that there is croppe and rote of gyle
So con tho men dyssymule and fayne
With standyng dropes in her eyen twayne
Whan that her herte is seleth no dystresse
To bysyden women with her doublenesse'

Her wordes spoken be so sighyngly
With so pytous chere and countenaunce
That euery wight that meneth trewly
Demeth they in herte haue suche grenaunce
They saye so impotable is her penaunce
That but her lady lust to shewe hem grace
They nyght anone must sterue in the place

Al lady myne they say/ I you ensure
As dothe me grace/ and I shal euer be
Whyle that my lyfe may laste and endure
To you as humble and lowe in erthe degre
As possyble is/ and serue al thyng as seure
Right as your selfe lyste that I do
And eke myne herte mote breste a two

Ful harde it is to knowe a mannes herte
For outwarde may no man the trouth deme
Whan wordes eat of mouth may neuer sterte
But if by reson semeth euery lyngyst to gayne
So it is sayd of herte as it is of grayne
O faythful women fol of gentrenesse
Than arte ye worthy to be serued with goodnesse

Dyeu

By processe moneth ofte womans pyte
Wenyng al thyng were as these men sey
They graunt hem grace of her benignyte
For that men shulde nat for her false dey
And with good hert sette hem in the wey
Of blyssful loue/ sepe it if they conne
And thus other whyle women bethe y wonne

And whan this man the pay hath by the fiele
And fully is in his possessioun
With that woman wepeth he no more to dele
After if he maye synde in the toun
Any woman his blynde affectioun
Unto beste we/ yuel mote he preue
A man for al his othes is harde to beleue

And for that euery false man hath a mase
As vnto euery wight is kyght to knowe
Whan this traytour this womā hath forsake
He faste spedeth him vnto his felowe
Tpl he be there his herte is ony a lowe
His false discrete may him nat suffyse
But of his trayson telleth al the wyse

Is this a faire auaunt/ is this honour
A man him selfe accuse thus and diffame
Is it good to confesse him selfe a traytour
And bring a woman to sclaundrous name
And tel howe he her body hath do shame
No worshippe may he thus to him conquer
But great disclaunder vnto him and her

To her nay/ yet was it no repreue
For al for vertue was that she wrought
But she that vntrewed hath al this myscheue
That spake so fayre/ x falsely inward thought
His be the sclaunder/ as it by reason ought
And vnto her thanke perpetuel
That in suche a nede helpe can so wel

Although through mens sleight and subtylte
A sely symple and innocent woman
Betrayde is/ no wonder sithe the eyre
Of Troye/ as the story tel can
Betrayde was through the diserete of man
And sette on fyre/ and al destroyed we
And finally distroyed as men fynd we

Betray nat many eyres great and byggen
What wight is it that can shape remedy
Ayenst these falsely purposed thyngen
Who can the crafte suche craftes tuppy
But many/ whose wytte is euer redy tapply
To thyng that so wunyng in to falsehede
Women bethe ware of false men I rede

And furthermore haue these men in vsage
That where they nat lyketh hem to spede
Suche as they ben/ with a double visage
They procuren for to purseue her nede
He prayeth him in his cause to procede
And largely guerdoneth he his trauayle
Lytel wote women howe men hem assayle

Another wretche vnto his felowe sayth
Thou syllyest faire/ she that the hath fryed
Is false/ inconstaunt/ and hath no feyth
She for the rode of selde is so desyred
And as an horse fro day to day she is hyred
That whan thou twynnest fro her company
Cometh another/ and blered is thyne eye

Nowe pricke on fast/ and ryde thy iourney
While thou art there/ for she behynd thy backe
So lyberal is/ she wol nothyng withsitte
But smartly of another take a smacke
Thus fare these women al the packe
Who so hem trusteth hanged mote he be
Euer they despre chaunge and nouelte

Wherof procedeth this but of enuy
For he him selfe her ne wynne may
He spedeth her requeste and byseech
As mānes blabbyng tong is wont alway
Thus dyuers men fal ofte in mase assay
For to dissourde folke in fondne wyse
For they may not escheue her empryse

Many one elle wolde for no good
That hath in loue his tyme spent and vsed
Wen wyst that his lady his desyre withstode
Er that he were of her playnly refused
Or waste and payne al that he had mysused
Wherfore he can none other remedy
But on his lady shapeth him to lye

Euery

Euery woman be sapyse is lyght to gete
Lay nayle soy nay/if she be wel sought
Who so may leyser haue with her to trete
Of his purpose shal he sapie nought
But he by madnesse be so depe brought
That he shende al with open homlynesse
That seuen women/they deten as I gesse

To sclaunder women thus what may prospte
To gentylesse namely that hem arme shulde
In defence of women/and hem helpte
As that the ordre of gentylesse wolde
If that a man spit gentyl to be holde
He must al eschewe that therto is contrary
A sclaunderous tonge is his great aduersary

A foule spere is of tonge to be lyght
For who so moche clappeth gaueth ofte
The tonge of man so swyfte is and so myght
That when it is stryfed up on lofte
Reason is shewed so slowly and softe
That it hem neuer ouertake may
Lorde so these men hem trusty in assay

Al be it that men fynde one woman vpre
Inconstaunt/reuersible/and barayble
Disdayneux/proude/full spited of malyce
Without saythe or lour/and discreuable
Shrewe/queyne/false/in al vntrust couplable
Wicked/feruent/or ful of cruelte
Yet sole wel it not that sorthe al women be

Whan the hygh god angeles fourmed had
Amonge hem al/where there were none
That soundry were malycious and bad
Yes al men wote there were many one
That for her pryde fyl fro heuen anone
Beholde and for thy pryde al angeles poynde nat
May/he that ye inserpreth is to blame (me

Of thother apostles/one a traytour was
The remenaunt yet good men and trewe
Do if it happe men fynde persons
O women false/sorthe good is in eschewe
And deme not that they al therfore be vnlyke
Ye wel knowen where falsenesse
Hem causeth women to trust the lesse

O euery man aught haue an herte trodre
Vnto a woman/and deme her honourable
Where her shape be thrifty or slender
Or she be good or badde/it is no fable
Euery wight wote that wytte hath resonable
That of a woman he dyscended is
Than is it shame of her to speke amysse

A wicked tre good frute may non forth bring
For sorthe the frute is as is the tre
Take hede of whom thou take thy beginyng
Let thy mother be myrrour vnto the
Honour her/if thou woste honoured be
Dispyse her than not in no maneere
Lest that therby thy wickednesse apere

An olde prouerbe sayd is in englysshe
That pryde or foule is ful dishonest
What that he be/and holde ful churlysshe
That lyth to defoule his owne nest
Then to say wel of women it is the best
And naught to dispyse hem ne depraue
If they wol her honour kepe or saue

The ladyes mey complayne hem on clerkes
That they haue made bokes of her disfame
In whyche they dispyse women & her werkes
And speke of hem great reproue and shame
And causelesse peue hem a wicked name
Thus they dispysed be on euery syde
Disclaundred and belowen on ful wyde

Tho sory bokes maken mencion
How women betrayde my espeual
Adam/Dauyd/Sampson/and Salomon
And many one mo/who may rehersse hem al
The treyson that they haue do and shal
The worlde her malyce may not comprehende
As clerkes sayne/for it hath none ende

Ouyde in his boke called Remedye
Of loue/great reproue of women writeth
Wherin I trow he dyd great folye
And euery wight pryn sorthe can hem deserueth
A clerkes custome is when he maryeth
Of women/he it praise/rymeth or lowe
Boy they be wicked vn/al thynke he the yonge

Tho. And

And that bothe scholers lerned in her childhede
For they of women beware shulde in age
And to loue hem euer be in drede
Sythe to diseyue is set al her corage
They say of yel men shulde cast thauantage
Namely of suche as men haue in be wrapped
For many a man by women hath mishapped

No charge is what so these clerkes sayne
Of al her wrytyng I do no cure
Al her labour and trauayle is in vayne
For bytwene me and my lady nature
Shal not be suffred/whyle ỹ world may dure
Thus these clerkes by her cruel tyrennye
On sely women bythen her maystrye

Whylom for many of hem were in my cheyne
Tyed/and now we for vnwoldy age
And vnlust/may not to loue atteyne
And sayne now that loue is but very dotage
Thus for they hem selfe lacken corage
They folde excyte by her wicked sawes
For to rebel ayenst me and my lawes

But maugre hem that blame women moste
Suche is the force of myne impression
That sodainly I can fel her boste
And al her wronge ymagynacion
It shal not be in her election
The foulest slutte in al the to wine to refuse
If that me lust/for al that they conne muse

But her in herte as brennyngly desyre
As though she were a ducheesse or a quene
So can I folkes hertes set on fyre
And as me lyst sende hem ioye or tene
They that to women be wont so bene
My sharpe persyng strokes how they smyte
Shul fele & know how they serue and byte

Parde this clerke/this subtyl Ouyde
And many an other vtterynge hane be
Of women/as it is know ful wyde
What no mo more/and that is great deynte
So excellent a clerke as was he
And other mo that couden ful wel pursue
Betrapped were/for ought ỹ they coude eschue

And trusteth wel that it is no mervayle
For women knowen playnly her entent
They wyste how soone sothly they conne assayle
Hem/and what falshed they in herte mente
And thus they clerkes in her daunger hente
With o venym an other is destroyed
And thus these clerkes ofte were anoyed

These lordes/me these gentyle neuertheless
Were none of the that wrought in this wyse
But suche as were beestialesse
They quytten thus these olde clerkes wyse
To clerkes lesse ought suffyse
Than to dispraue women generally
For worshyp shal they nouȝt get therby

If that these men/that louers hem pretende
To women were faythful/good/and trewe
And diedde hem to diseyue/or to offende
Women to loue hem wolde not eschewe
But euery day hath many an herte newe
If on one abyde can no whyle
What force is it suche a wight to begyle

They beare the women vpon honde
That lightly and without any payne
They women be/they can no wight withstonde
That his disease lyst to hem complayne
They be so frele/they may hem not restrayne
But who so lyketh hem may lightly haue
So be her hertes easy in to graue

To mayster Iohan de Meone/as I suppose
They it was a feude occupacioun
In makyng of the Romaunt of the rose
So many a slyghe ymagynacioun
And peryllous for to tellen vp and doun
The longe processe/so many a slygh cautel
For to diseyue a sely damosel

Naught can I say/ne my wytte comprehende
That arte/payne/and subtylte shulde sayle
For to conquere/and soone maste an ende
Whan men a feble place shal assayle
And soone also to venquysshe a battayle
Of whiche no wight may make resystence
Ne herte hath none to make any defence

Than

Thay made folowe of neceſſyte
Sythe arte aſſerth ſo great engyn & payne
A woman to deſcepue whate ſo ſhe be
Of conſtaunce be they not ſo bareyne
As that ſome of theſe clerkes ſayne.
But they be as women ought to be
Sadde/conſtaunte/and fulfylled of pyte

Howe frendly was Medea to Jaſon
In conquerynge of the fleece of golde
Howe falſely quyt he her true affection
By whome vyctorie he gate as he wolde
Howe may this man for ſhame be ſo bolde
To ſaſſery her/that fro his dethe and ſhame
Him kept/and gate him ſo great pryſe & name

Of Troy alſo the traytour Eneas
The fayth leſſe wretche/howe he him forſwore
To Dydo that quene of Cartage was
That him reſcued of his ſmertes ſore
What gentyleſſe might ſhe haue do more
Thay ſhe with herte vnfayned to him ſydde
And what myſchefe to her therof after betydde

In myn legende of natures may men fynde
Who ſo lyſteth therin for to rede
That othe ne beheſt may may bynde
Of reprouable ſhame haue they no drede
In mannes herte trouthe hath no ſtede
The ſoyle is naught/there may no trouth grow
To women newely it is not vnknowe (me

Cleopes ſayne alſo there is no malyce
Vnto womans wicked craftyneſſe
O woman/for me ſhalt thou thy falſe chere
Sythe men of the ſuche harme witneſſe
Deth ware women of her ſtedfaſtneſſe
Kepe thyne vnne/what men clappe or crake
And ſome of them ſhal ſmerte I vndertake

Alaſſe of women what is it to bydde
They ſlee me man/deſtroye me eyther
Ne oppreſſe falſe/ne ouerlyde
Detrap empayre/ruyne/or dyſcheres
Ne byrnen me for londes ne for mede
Empoyſon falſe/ne houſes ſet on fyre
Ne falſe conſpiracies made for no hyre

Truſt parfyte loue/entyre chere
Ferment wyl/and vnfeygned ſeruage
All the were good/as ſyteth wel to be
Haue women euer of cuſtome and vſage
And wel they conne maniers vp aſſuage
With ſoft wordes/diſcrete & benygne (fygne
What they be in ward they ſhewe outwarde by

Womans herte vnto no cruelte
Enclyned is/but they be charytable
Pytous/deuoute/ful of humylite
Shamefaſte/debonayre/and amyable
Dredeful/and of wordes meaſurable
What women theſe haue not paraventure
Iolo with not the way of her nature

Why ſayne our firſt mother natheleſſe
Made al mankynde leſe his ſyberte
And naked it of ioye doutleſſe
For goddes heeſte diſobeyed ſhe
Whan ſhe preſumed to taſte of the tre
That god forbade/that ſhe eate therof ſholde
And ne had the dyuel be/nomore ſhe wolde

The enuyous ſwelling/that the fende our foe
Had vnto man in herte for his welthe
Sent a ſerpent/and made her for to go
To diſceyue Eue/& thus was mans welthe
Byraft him by the fende in a ſtelthe
The woman not knowyng of that diſceyte
God wote ful ferre was it from her conceyte

Wherfore I ſay/this good woman Eue
Our father Adam diſceyued nought
There may no man for diſceyte it preue
Properly/but that ſhe in herte and thought
Had it compaſſed firſt or ſhe it wrought
And for ſuche was not her impreſſyon
They may it cal no diſceyte of her by reaſon

Ne no wight diſceyueth/but he purpoſe
The fende this diſceyte caſte/and nothyng ſle
Than is it wrought to deme or ſuppoſe
That of his harme ſhe ſhulde the cauſe be
Wyte the fende/and ſhe be the maugre
And excuſed ſome ſay innocent
Haue onely that ſhe brake obedyent

And touchyng this/ful fewe men there be
Vnnethes any dare I safely say
Fro day to day/as men may al day se
But that the heste of god they disobay
Haue this in mynde sirs I you pray
If that ye be discrete and resonable
ye wol her holde the more excusable

And where men say in man is stedfastnesse
And woman is of her corage vnstable
Who may of Adam beare suche a wytnesse
Telleth me this/was he not chaungeable
They bothe weren in o case semblable
Saue wyllyng the sende discreyued Eue
And so dyd she not Adam by your leue

Yet was this synne happy to mankynde
The sende discreyued was for al his sleyght
For aught he coude him I his sleyghtes wynde
For his trespace came fro heuen on heyght
God/to discharge man of his weyght
Flesshe and bloode tooke of a Virgyne
And suffred dethe/him to delyuer of pyne

And god/to whom there may nothyng hyd be
If he in woman knowen had suche malyce
As men recorde of hem in generalte
Of our lady of lyfe reperatryce
Nolde haue be borne/but that she of Vyce
Was voyde/and ful of vertue wel he wyste
Endowed/of her to be borne him lyste

Her heaped vertue hath suche excellence
That al to feane is mannes facunde
To declare it/and therfore in suspence
Her dewe praysyng put nedes must be
But thus I say/verely that she
Next god/best frende is that to man longeth
The key of mercy by her gyrdle hongeth

And of mercy hath euery man suche nede
That refusyng that/ farwel the wy of man
And of her power no wyseman ryght good rede
She mercy may wel/and purchace can
Displeseth her not/honoureth that woman
And other women al for her sake
And but ye do/your soule we shal awake

In any boke also where can ye fynde
That of the werkes of dethe or of lyfe
Of Jesu/spelleth or maketh any mynde
That women hym forsoke for wo or stryfe
Where was there any wight so entendyfe
About him as woman/proued none
The apostels hym forsoken euerychone

Women forsoke him not for al the saythe
Of holy churche in woman lefte onely
This is no lees/for thus holy writte sayethe
Loke and ye shal so fynde it hardely
And therfore I may wel preue therby
That in woman reigneth stable constaunce
And in men is the chaunge of varyaunce

Thou precious gême of martyrs Margarete
That of thy bloode diedest none effusyon
Thou louer trewe/thou mayden manfuete
Thou constante woman in thy passyon
Ouercame the sendes temptacion
And many a wight conuerted thy doctryne
Vnto the saythe of holy god thou Virgyne

But vnderstandeth this/I onely cómende her
By encheson of her Virgynyte (nought
Trusteth it came neuer in thought
For euer were I ayenst chastyte
And euer shal/ but so this meueth me
Her louyng herte/and constante to her lay
Pryue out of remembraunce I ne may

Nowe holdeth this for ferme/and for no lye
That this trewe and iuste cómendation
Of women tel I for no flatterye
Ne bycause of pride or elation
But onely so/ for this entencion
To preue hem corage of perseueraunce
In vertue/ and her honour to auaunce

The more vertue/the lasse is the pride
Vertue so digne is and so noble in kynde
That Vyce and he wol not infere abyde
He putteth Vyces clene out of his mynde
He flyeth fro hem/ he leaueth hem behynde
O woman that of vertus arte hoystresse
Great is thy honour and thy worthynesse

Thus

Then wol I thus vnclude and defyne
We pore clerkes our impefect gyfte
That rede ye be our excuse to enlyne
That of these false men our rebel feme
Ye do purpe shewne and that anone
Doyde hem our court/a banysshe hem for euer
So that therm more come they neuer

Fulfylled be it/enclyng al delaye
Lose there be more cyrcumstaunce
Written in the lusty mouthe of Maye
In our palays where many a nyghtyngale
Of louers true haue herbergage
The yere of grace ioyful and secunde
A thousande foure hundred and seconde.

C Explicit.

CThus endeth the letter of Cupyde/
and here after folowyth a
balade in commenda
tion of our
Lady.

ALthough I coude many thynges reherse
Of olde poetes/touchyng this matere
Now me thynketh the poetes gan to perce
Of his seruauntes settyng hem in fere
To seke the fyre of therrour and the fere
To serue of some the guerdon and greuaunce
That ouer with his seruauntes do enaunce

Wherfore now we playnly I wol my style dresse
Of some to speke/at nede that wol not faple
Alas for lose I me can ne may expresse
Her passyng pure/and that is no meruayle
O wynde of grace/now blow me vnto my saple
O auryate fyrcour of Cleo for to wute
Thy peynte enspyre of that I wol endyte

Alas/vn worthy I am and vnable
To sowe suche one/al wemen surmountyng
Out take vnkynde to me and mercyable
That is of pyte the welle and the spryng
Wherfore of her in lowde and in prayfyng
Do as I can/supposed by her grace
Right thus I saye/knelyng to fore her face

O sterre of sterres with thy stremes clere
Sterre of the est/to shyppemen syght and gyde
O lusty spryng most plesaunt to apere
Whose bought beamis þ clouden may not hyde
O way of lyfe to hem that go nat ryde
Hauen after tempest surest vp to ryse
Do me haue mercy for thy ioyes fyue

O right ful rule/o bote of holynesse
And lyghtsome lyne of pyte for to playne
Original begynning of grace & al goodnesse
And clennest cloudyt of vertue most soureyne
Mother of mercy/our trouble to restrayne
Chambre and closet clennest of chastyte
And named herbrough of the deyte

O closed garden al voyde of wedes wicke
Cristallyn welle/of clernesse clere consigned
Fruytfyged of fyue of foyles fayre and thicke
And redolent sedic ryalle dere worthily deyned
Remembre on synners that to the be assigned
Or wicked fendes her wrathe on hem wreche
Lanterne of lyght thou her lyues lerche

Paradyse of plesaunce/gladsome to al good
Benigne braunchelet of the pyne tre
Vyrgine enuermayled/refresshet of our bote
Preseruer of langour þ pailed may not be
Dyssul blomy blosome/bryngyng in bounte
Thy mantel of mercy on our myserie sprede
And er we awake wrappe vs vnder thy wede

O rody roser/flouryng without spyne
Fountayne al fythlesse/as bryel currant clere
Sothe drop of thy graceful deawe vp proppyne
O light without nebule/shynyng lyke sphere
Wherein no musclenes/purelle without pere
Flambe do my þ doleful sight of thyn issue
Remembryng thy seruates for thy magnificence

Of al chastite protectryce and bylde
Returne of cryssed put in the penytencyer
To shew that erryn in the pathe of her synnes
To mercy forwandred tent and pouryden
To sapyte and to fresshe the poysonous
Vnto humanite/bothe rust and mustye
Fruteful in al tho that in her affye

Tho. iii. To

A balade of our Lady.

Tasshy that trunchy thou arte itenerarie
O blyssful bramble to knyghtes of thy werre
To wery wrethmen she is dowrne demarre
Hede vnto martyres that haue sayled ferre
Laureate crowne stremyng as a sterre
To hem that put hem in palastre for thy sake
Lours of hir cõquest/thou white as any lake

O myrthe of martyrs/swetter than syrops
Of confessours also rychest donatyse
Vnto virgynes eternal laurriole
Afore al women hauyng prerogatyse
Mother and mayde/ bothe wyndowe and wyse
Of al the worlde ys none but thou alone
Nowe sythe thou may be socour to my mone

O trusty turtle truest of test of al trewe
O ruttyse columbe/replete of al meknesse
O nyghtyngale with thy notes newe
O poppynay pured with al clennesse
O lauerock of loue/synging with swetnesse
Phebus awaytyng tyl on thy brest he lyght
Vnder thy wynge at domesday vs dyght

O rubye rubified in the passyon
Of thy sonne/vs haue amonge in mynde
O stedfast dyametre of duration
That se we ferre any tyme myght thou synde
For none to hym was founden halfe so kynde
O hardy herte/o louyng creature
What was it but loue that made the so endure

Semely saphire/depe loupe and blewe ewage
Stable as the loupe ewage of pyte
This is to say the freshest of vysage
Thou louest vnchaunged hem that ferrest the
And if offence or varyeng in hem be
Thou arte aye redy vpon her wo to rewe
And hem restorest with hert ful trewe

O goodly gladed whan that Gabriel
With ioy the grette/that may not be nombred
Or halse the blysse who conde write or tel
Whan the holy goste to the was obumbred
Wherthrough fedes were bytterly encombred
O wemlesse mayde embelysshed in his bryghe
That may and aungel therof gladden myghe

Lo here the blesse and the budde of glorie
Of whom the prophete so longe spake before
Lo here the fame that was in memorie
Of Ysaie/so longe or she was borne
Lo here of David the desyrous corne
Lo here the grounde of lyfe in to bylde
Becomyng man our raunsom for to pylde

O glorious hyole and hyre inuyolate
O fyry Tytan/perfyng with thy bemes
Whose vertuous bughtnes was I first vibrate
That al the worlde embelysshed with flames
Conseruatryce of synges/dubbes/ and realmes
Of Ysaies sede swete sumamyte
Wesure my mournig myn owne Margaryte

O souereignest sought out of Ryon
Locble wt golde de we from about berayned
De we bussh vndient/fyrelesse fyre set on
Flambing with fernesse/not with hete payned
Durying dayse that no wether stayned
Fleece vndefouled of gentylest Jedron
And fructifyeng fayrest the perde of Aaron

The mighty arche/probatyse pisyne
Laughyng autore/and of peace olyue
Columpne of base/vp bearyng from abyme
Why nere I rouneyng here to descryue
Chosen of Joseph/whom he tobe to wyue
Vnknowyng him/chaldyng by myracle
And of our manly fygure the tabernacle

I haue none englysshe conuenyent or digne
Myn hertes heale lady the with to honour
Inuyre cleane/therfore I wol resigne
In to thyne hande/tyl thou lyst socour
To helpe my makyng bothe flouryssh and flour
Than shulde I shewe in loue howe I brende
In songes makyng/thy name to cõmende

For if I conde be fore thyne excellence
Hyngry in loue I wolde what I sele
And euer standen lady in thy presence
To shewe in eyen howe I loue you wele
And sythe although your herte be made of stele
To you withouten any desemerrance
Ioy ey Jesus tous ma fiance

Where

Where myght I serue euer better beset
Alas my herte sythe dyed to beholde
The face of your/the bonor so wel thew shyt
That I may se the in myne herte colde
And or I passe out of my bayes alas
To your syngyng euermore bitterly
Your eyen two wol slee me sodainly

For loue I langoure/ blyssed be such sikenesse
Sythe it is for you my hertely suffysaunce
I can not ese say in my distresse
So sayre one hath myne herte in gouernaunce
And after that I begynne on esperaunce
With seure ceilune/ though it thyne herte perce
Yet for thy sake this letter I do reherce

God wote on mussyke I can not/but I gesse
Alas why so that I might say or synge
So loue I you myn owne souerayn maistres
And euer shal without departyng
Myrrour of beaute/ for you out should I rynge
In remembraunce ebe of your eyen clere
Thus seure from you my souerayn lady dere

So wolde god your loue wolde me sso
Sythe for your sake I synge day by day
Herte why nylt thou breake a two
Sythe with my lady wel I me may
Thus many a roundel and many a virelay
In freshe englysshe/ whan I me layser fynde
I do trouble/ on you to haue mynde

Now lady myne/ sithe I you serue and diede
And you vnchaunged euer fynde in o degre
Whose grace me may slye fro your womanhede
Disdayneth not for to remembre on me
Myne herte bleedeth for I may not you se
And sithe ye wolde my mornyng desyreuse
Pleurez pour moy si vous plaist amoureuse

What murmyst in thought I in payne be
I am departed from you my souerayne
Fortune alas/ dost thou so destroue
That in no wyse I cannot me may atteyne
To se the beaute of your eyen tweyne
Wherfore I say/ for tryfles bothe me greue
Sent me not fast make departir de moy pleure

Why nere my wyssyng beaute to sucke esplait
That I myght say for woye of your paseure
Die a moy ouer ce qui peult tout
Die a moy ouer/ the hyghest excellence
That euer had wight/ of fayre myne auenture
Je my you/ retweth on my payne sure
I am so sore wounded to the herte

To syue wel mery two louers were pfere
So may I say without eny blame
If any man to wyfe were
I roude him teche for to be tame
Lette him go loue and se where it be game
For I am vnder vnto soberneſſe
For her that is of women chefe princeſſe

But euer whan thought my hert shuld enbrace (ce
Than vnto me is best remedy
Whan I loke on your goodly fresshe face
So mery a myrrour roude I neuer espye
And if I roude I wolde it magnifye
For neuer none was so fayre pfounde
To reken hem al/ and also Rosamounde

And fynally with mouthe and wyl present
Of double eye without repentaunce
Myn herte I yeue you lady in this entent
That ye shal holy therof haue gouernaunce
Taking my leaue with hertes obeysaunce
(Salue regina) synging sasie of al
To be our helpe whan we to the cal

Al our loue is but pdelitesse (layne
Saue your loue alone/ who might therto atayne
Who so wol haue a name of gentylleſſe
I counsayle him in loue that he not fayne
Thou swete lady/ refute in euery payne
Whose mercy moste to me auayleth
To gre by grace/ whan that fortune fayleth

Naught may be told without eny fable
Your hyghrenome/ your womanly beaute
Your gouernaunce to al worshyp able
Puttith euery herte in ese in his degree
O Sprite/ o floure despyte
Sythe I am for you so enbrased
Ellesyues may be euer in pese

With

A balade to kyng Henry the fourth.

With feruent herte my dreft hath dreft on fire
I ardant eſpoir que mon cuer pourra eſt mout
Dauoir lamour de celle que ie deſire
I meane you ſwete moſt pleſaunt of porte
Et ie ſay bien que ceo neſt pas mon tort
That for you ſynge/ ſo as I may for mone
For your departyng/ alone I lyue alone

Thoughe I myght I wolde none other chefe
In your ſeruyce I wolde be founden fadde
Therfore I loue no labour that ye leſe
Whan in longyng forſt ye be ſtadde
Loke vp pe louers and be right gladde
Ayenſt ſaynt Valentynes day
For I haue chefe that neuer forſake I may.

¶ Explicit.

¶ Johan Gower/ vnto the worthy and noble kynge Henry the fourth.

O Noble worthy kyng Henry the ferthe
In whom the gladde fortune is befal
The people to gouerne here vpon erthe
God hath the choſen in comforte of vs al
The worſhip of this lande which was down fal
Now ſtant vpright thrugh grace of thy goode
Whiche euery man is holde for to bleſſe (neſſe

The highe god of his iuſtyce alone
The right whiche longeth to thy regalty
Declared hath to ſtande in thy perſone
And more than god may no man iuſtify
Thy tytel is knowe vpon thyne aunceſtry
The londes folke hath the thy right affirmed
So ſtante thy regle/ of god a man cõfirmed

There is no man mayſaye in other wyſe
That god him ſelfe ne hath the right declared
Wherof the lande is bounde to thy ſeruyce
Whiche for defaute of helpe hath long cared
But now there is no mannes herte ſpared
To loue and ſerue/ and worſhe thy pleſaunce
And al this is thrugh goddes purueyaunce

In al thyng whiche is of god begonne
There ſpedeth grace if it be well gouerned
Thus tellen they whiche of the bokes conne
Wherof my ſoule I wote well thou arte lerned
Aſke of thy god/ ſo ſhalte thou nat be warned
Of no requeſt whiche is reſonable
For god vnto the good is fauorable

kyng Salomon whiche had at his aſkyng
Of god/ what thyng him was leueſt craue
He chaſe wyſedom vnto gouernyng
Of goddes folke/ the whiche he wolde ſaue
And as he chaſe it fyl him ſo to haue
For thrugh his wytte while þ he reigne laſt
He gate him peace and reſt in to his laſt

But Alexander as telleth his ſtorie
Vnto the god beſought in other wey
Of al the worlde to wynne the victorie
So that vnder his ſwerde it myght obey
In warre he had al that he wolde prey
The mighty god behight him that beheſt
The worlde wanne/ and had it of conqueſt

But thoughe it fyl at thylke tyme ſo
That Alexander his aſkyng hath atcheued
This ſynful worlde was al paynem tho
Was none whiche hath the highe god beleued
No wõder was thoughe thilke worlde was gre (ued
Thoughe a tyrant his purpoſe myght wyn
Al was vengeaunce and infortune of ſyn

But nowe the faithe of Chriſt is come a place
Among the princes in this erthe here
It ſytte hem wel to do pyte and grace
But yet it muſt be tempred in maneres
For they ſynden cauſe in the matere
Vpon the point/ what afterwarde betyde
The lawe of right ſhal nat be layde a ſyde

So maye a kynge of warre the voyage
Vndayne and take/ as he therto is holde
To clayme and aſke his right/ful heritage
In al places where it is withholde
But other wyſe if god him ſelfe wolde
Aſſyne loue and peace bitweene the kynges
Peace in the beſt aboute al erthly thynges

Good

Good is to eschewe warre/and nathelesse
A kyng may make warre vpon his right
For of batayle the fynal ende is peese
Thus stant the lawe that a worthy knyght
Vpon his trouth may go to the fyght
But if so were that he myght chese
Better is the peace of which may no man lese

The warre is mother of the wronges al
It sleeth the preest in holy churche at messe
It rysyth the maydē/ and bothe her stoute to fal
The warre maketh the great cyte lasse
And bothe the lawe his rules ouerpasse
Ther is no thig wherof myschefe may growe
Whiche is nat caused of the warre I trowe

To stere peace ought euerisshe on lyue
Firste for to sette his liege lorde in rest
And eke these other men that they ne stryue
For so this lande may stande at best
What kyng that wolde be the worthyest
The more he myght ouer deedly warre ceasse
The more he shulde his worthynesse encreasse

The warre bringeth in powerte at his heles
Wherof the cōmen people is sore greued
The warre hath set his carte on shilbe wheles
Where that fortune may nat be beleued
For whan men wene best to haue atcheued
Ful ofte it is al newe to begyn
The warre hath nothyng syker tho he wyn

Peace is the chefe of al the worldes welth
And to the heuen it ledeth eke the way
Peace is of soule and lyfe the mannes helth
Of pestylence/ and bothe the warre away
Thy liege lorde take hede of that I say
If warre may be lefte/take peace on hande
Whiche may nat be without goddes sande

For thy my worthy prince in Ihesus halue
As for a parte whose faith thou hast be gyde
Ley to this olde sore a newe salue
And do the warre away what so betyde
Purchace peace and sette it by thy syde
And suffre nat thy people be deuoured
So shal thy name euer after stande honoured

With peace stante euery creature in rest
Without peace there may no lyfe be glade
Aboue al other good peace is the best
Peace hath hym selfe whan wer is al bestadde
The peace is safe/ the warre is euer a dradde
Peace is of al charite the kay
Whiche hath the lyfe and soule for to wray

If any man be nowe or euer was
Ayen the peace thy pleny counsaylour
Lette god be of thy counsayle in this caas
And put away the crewel warryour
For god whiche is of man the creatour
He wolde nat men slough his creature
Without cause of deedly forfayture

Thy liege lorde if that the lyste to serche
The soth ensāples what the war hath wrought
Thou shalte wel here of wyse mennes speche
That deedly warre tourneth in to nought
For if these olde bokes be wel sought
There myst thou se what thig the war hath do
Bothe of conquest and conquerour also

Where nedeth most/ behoueth most to lose
thy lande/ howe so thy warres be without
Of tyme passed/ who that hede to lose
Good were at home to se right wel about
For euermore the worste is for to doute
But if thou mightest parfyte peace attayne
There shulde be no cause for to playne

For lawne honour/ or for the worldes good
They that whylom the stronge warres made
Where be they nowe/ bethynke wel I thy mood
The day is gone/ the nyght is derke & fade
Her crueltie whiche made hem than glade
They sote wery nowe/ & yet haue nought ynough
The blode is shad/ which no man may restore

About a kyng good counsayle is to preyse
Aboue al other thynges most laylable
But yet a kyng within hym selfe shal peyse
And seen the thynges that be resonable
And therupon he shal his wyttes stable
Among the man to sette peace in empyre
For loue of hym whiche is the kyng of heuen

Ah/ wel

A balade to kyng henry the fourth.

Al wel is him that shulde neuer blode
But if it were in cause of rightwysenesse
For if a kyng the peryl vnderstode
What is to slee the people/than I gesse
The deedly warres and the heynousse
Wherof peace disfourbed is ful ofte
Shulde at some tyme cesse and wepe softe

O kyng fulfylled of grace and knyghthode
Remembre vpon this poynt for Christes sake
If peace be proffered vnto thy manhode
Thyne honour sauesset it nat be forsake
Though thou the warres darste wel vndertake
After reason yet temper thy courage
For sythe to peace there is none auauntage

Thy worthy lorde/thynke wel howe so befal
Of thylke loore/ as holy bokes sayne
Christe is the herd/ and we be membres al
As wel be subiecte as the sourrayne
So sytte it wel that charite be playne
Whiche vnto god him selfe most accordeth
So vs the loore of Christes worde recordeth

In tholde lawe or Christ him selfe was bore
Among the. x. cõmaundementes I rede
Howe that manslaughter shulde be forbore
Suche was the wyl that tyme of the godhede
But afterwarde whã Christ tooke his mãhede
Peace was the firste thyng he lette do crye
Ayenst the worldes rancour and enuy

And or Christ went out of this erthe here
And styghed to heuyn/ he made his testament
Where he bequath to his disyples there
And gaue his peace/ whiche is the foũdement
Of charite/ without whose assent
The worldes peace may neuer wel be tryed
Nelowe slepte/ ne lawe inforced

The iewes with the paynyms hadden werre
But they among hem selfe stode euer I peace
Why shulde than our peace stonde out of erre
Which Christ hath chose vnto his owne enheritee
For Christ is more than was Moyses
And Christ hath sette the parfyte of the lawe
The whiche shulde in no wyse be withdrawe

To pees be peace was cause why Christ dyde
Without peace may nothig stonde auayled
But nowe a man may se on euery syde
Howe Christes fayth is euery day assayled
With the paynems destroyed & so batayled
That for defaute of helpe and of defence
Vnneth hath Christ his dewe reuerence

The right faithe to kepe of holy churche
The first poynt is named of knyghthode
And euery man is holde for to worshe
Vpon the poynt þ stante to his manhode
But nowe alas/ the fame is spred so brode
That euery man this thing complayneth
And yet is there no man that helpe ordayneth

The worldes cause is wayted ouer al
There be the warres redy to the ful
But Christes owne cause in special
There ben the swerdes and the speres dul
And with the sentence of the Popes bul
As for to done the folke payne obey
The churche is tourned al another wey

It is wonder aboue any mannes wyt
Without warre howe Christ faith was wroght
And we that be vpon this erthe yet
Ne kepe it nat as it was first begon
To euery creature vnder the sonne
Christ badde him selfe that we shulde preche
And to the folke his Euangely teche

Wote lyghte it is to kepe than to make
But that we foundery made to sore sonde
We kepe nat/ but sette it lyghtly flake
The peace of Christ hath al to broke his bõde
We rest our selfe/ and suffery euery londe
To slee erche other/ as thyng vndefended
So stant the warre/ and peace is nat amended

But though the herd of holy churche aboute
Ne do nat al his hole busynesse
Amonge the people to sette peace and loue
These kyngs oughten of her rightwysnesse
Her owne cause among hem selfe redresse
Tho Peters shyp as nowe hath lost his stere
Il syttes in hem the barge for to stere

As holy

If holy churche after the dewte
Of Chriſtes woode ne is nat alwyſed
To make peace/ atrede/ and vnyte
Among the kynges that be now be deuyſed
Yet nathcles the ſe we ſtande offyſed
Of manne wyte to be ſo remeuable
Without that we ſtande ſure ſelfe ſtable

Of holy churche we ben chyldren al
And euery chylde is holde for to be we
Vnto the mother/ ſo we that euer it fal
Or elſe he muſt reaſon defalowe we
And for that cauſe a kynght ſhal furſt awowe
The right of holy churche to defende
That no man ſhal the priuylege offende

Thus were it good to ſette al in euyn
The worldes pumpe/ and the parlatre bothe
For lone of hym whiche is the kyng of heuyn
And if men ſhulde algate weyen wrothe
The ſarazins/ whiche vnto Chriſt ben lothe
Lette men be armed agenſt hem to fyghte
So may the kynght his oeſe of armes rightte

Vpon the poynte ſtant Chriſtes peace oppreſſ
Furſt holy churche in her ſelfe deuyded (ſed
Whiche ought of reaſon furſt to be redreſſed
But yet ſo hyghe a cauſe is nat deſpded
And thus whan humble patience is pided
The remenaunt whiche that they ſhulde rule
No wonder is though it ſtande out of rule

Of that the herd is ſiche the ſymmes abey
Thoſe tregues that to Chriſtes peace belongen
For worldes good theſe deedly warres maken
Whiche helpleſſe/ as in Bafaunce hongen
The herd aboue hem hath nat vnderfongen
To ſette peace/ but euery man ſtreth other
And in this wyſe hath charite no brother

The two deſcuites hangen in the thirde
Of inſcruantes that ſeyn ſo we ben betrayed
Betwene the two they ſetten in ampbe
Where no we al day they ſyende an open gate
And thus the deedly warre ſtande algate
But euer I hope of hyng Henries grace
That he it is/ whiche ſhal the peace embrace

Thy worthy noble prince and hyng endyted
Whom god hath of his grace ſo purſewed
Beholde and ſe the worlde vpon this poynt
As for thy parte/ that Chriſtes peace be ſerued
So ſhal thy hyghe merite be deſerued
To hym whiche al ſhal quyte at laſte
For this lyfe here may no whyle laſte

Be Alexandre/ Hector/ and Iulyus
Be Machabeus/ Dauyd/ and Joſue
Be Charlemayne/ Godfray/ and Arthus
Full fylled of warre and of mortalyte
Her fame abyde/ but al is Vanyte
For dethe/ whiche hath the warres vnder fote
Hath made an ende/ of which there is no bote

So many a man the ſothe wete and ſeo we
That peace is good for euery hyng to haue
The fortune of the warre is euer vnſure we
But where peace is/ ther is the marches ſauf
That no we is vp/ to more we is vnder graue
The mightye god hath al grace in hande
Without hym men may nat longe ſtande.

Of the tennes to wynne or leſe a chace
Way no lyfe wete or that the bal be ronne
Al ſtant in god what thyng me ſhal purchace
Thende is in hym or that it be begonne
Wey ſayne the wolle whan it is wel ſponne
Dothe that the clothe is ſtronge and pfytable
And elſe it maye neuer be durable

The worldes chaunces vpon aventure
Dry euer lette/ but thylke chaunce of pers
Is ſo behouely to the creature
That is about al other perſen
But it may nat begete nathcles
Among the men to laſte any whyle
But where the herte is playne without gyle.

The peace is as it were a ſacrament
Before the god/ and ſhal with wordes playne
Without any double entendement
Be treated/ for the trouthe can nat feyne
But if the man within hym ſelfe hym beyne
The ſubſtaunce of the peace may nat be holde
But euery day it chaungeth vpon vs bolde

But

A balade to kyng Henry the fourth.

But who that is of charite parfyte
He voydeth al fleyghtes farre awaye
And setteth his wolde vpon the same plyte
Where that his hert hath founde a fyxer waye
And thus what any conformeth hym trewly waye
And that these bey handled with the wyse
It shal abyde/ and stande in al wyse

The Apostel sayth/ there may no fyse be good
Whiche is nat grounded vpon charyte
For charite ne shedde neuer blood
So hath the warre as there no properte
For thylke vertue whiche is sayd pyte
With charite so ferforth is acquaynted
That in her may no false semblant be paynted

Lassodoir/ whose writynge is authorised
Sayth: where that pyte reigneth is grace
Thrugh which the peace hath al his welth assised
So that of warre he dredeth no manace
Where pyte dwelleth in the same place
There may no deedly cruelte soiourne
Wherof that merry shulde his way tourne

To se what pyte forthe with merry dothe
The croupne is at Rome in thylke empyre
Of Constantyne/ whiche is a tale sothe
Whan hym was leuer his owne dethe desyre
Than do the pong chyldren to martyre
Of crewelte he sette the quarele
Pyte he wrought/ and pyte was his hele

For thylke mannes pyte whiche he dede
God was pytous/ and made hym hole at al
Syluester came/ and in the same stede
Yaue hym baptyme first in special
Whiche dyd away the fyune original
And al his lepre it hath so purifyed
That his pyte for euer is magnyfied

Pyte was cause why this Emperour
Was hole in body and in soule bothe
And Rome also was sette in thylke honour
Of Chusties sayth/ so that the leue of lothe
Whiche hadden he with Chust to fore wrothe
Restored were vnto Chusties lore
Thus shal pyte be prayse euermore

Hy worthy liege lorde Henry by name
Whiche Englande hast to gouerne a right
Hem ought wel thy pyte to proclame
Whiche openlyche in al the worldes syght
Is shewed/ with the helpe of god almyght
To yeue vs peace which long hath be debated
Wherof thy puse shal neuer be abated

Hy lorde/ in whom hath euer pet be founde
Pyte/ without spotte of vyolence
Kepe thylke peace alway within thy bounde
Whiche god hath planted in thy conscyence
So shal the cronyque of thy pacyence
Among the sapners be taken in to memory
To the legende of perdurable glorye

And to thyne erthely puse/ so as I can
Whiche euery man is holde to cõmende
I Gower/ whiche am al thy liege man
This letter vnto thyne excellence I sende
Ab I whiche euer vnto my lyues ende
Wol praye for the state of thy persone
In worshippe of thy sceptre and thy throne

Nat onely to my kyng of peace I write
But to these other princes chistery al
That erhe of hem his owne herte endyte
And se the warre or more myschefe fal
Sette ehe the rightful pope vpon his stal
Kepe charite/ and dead we pyte to hande
Maynteyn lawe/ and so the peace shal stande.

Explicit carmen de pacis cõmendatione ꝙd ad laudem et memoriam serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti/ suis humilis orator Johannes Gower composuit.

Electus Chusti/ per cry Henrici fuisti
Qui bene Benisti/ cum propria regna petisti
Tu male Victisti bonus bona restituisti
Et populo tristi/ nouus gaudia contribuisti
Est mihi spes lata/ ꝙd absque p te renouata
Succedent fata/ retrii prosperitate beata
Est tibi nam grata/ gratia sponte data
Henrici quarti/ primis regni fuit annus
Duo mihi desint Vitus ab astra meus
Dia tempus habent finem natura monstrat
Quem

Quum virtute sua frangere nemo potest
Extra posse nihil quisquis mihi dicit remansit
Amplius vt scribam mea musa posse manet
Quum potuit scripsi/sed nitor ha cuncta finectus
Turbauit finitos scripta relinquo scelis
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter
Immodo mihi mea penna silent
Hoc tamen in fine verborum quero meorum
Prospera quo flatuat regna fluenta deus.

Explicit.

Of the Luckowe and the Nyghtyngale.

THe god of loue/ah benedicite
Howe mighty & how great a lorde is he
For he can make of lowe hertes hye
And of hie lowe/and lyfe for to dye
And harde hertes he can maken fre

He can make within a lytel stounde
Of suche folke hole/fre/fre and sounde
And of hole he can make sike
He can bynde and vnbynden eke
That he wol haue bounden or vnbounde

To tell his myght my wytte may not suffyse
For he can make of wyse folke fulnyce
For he may do al that he wol deuyse
And spitty fable to distroyen tyme
And proude hertes he can make agryse

Shortly al that euer he wol he may
Agayust him dare no wight say nay
For he can glad and grene whom him lyketh
And who that he wol he lowteth or syketh
And most his myght he shedeth euer in May

For euery true gentyl herte fre
That wotth him to/or thynketh for to be
Agayne May nowe shal haue some syzyng
Other ioy or ese to some mourning
In no cuntry so much as thynketh me

For whan they may here the byrdes synge
And se the flowres and the leaues spryngе
That bringeth in to her remembraunce
A manere ease medled with grefaunce
And lusty thoughtes/ful of great longyng

And of that longyng cometh sekenesse
And therof groweth oste great sickenesse
And for lacke of that that they desyre
And thus in May ben hertes sette on fyre
So that they brennen forthe in great distresse

I spede this of selyng trewly
For I be olde and vnlusty
Yet I haue felte of ꝑ sickenesse through May
Bothe hote and colde/and ayes euery day
Howe sore alwys there wote no wight but I

I am so shaken with the feuers whyte
Of al this May slepe I but a lyte
And also it is not lyke to me
That any herte shulde slepy be
In whom that loue his fyry darte wol smyte

But as I lay this other nyght wakyng
I thought howe louers had a tokenyng
And amonge hem it was a comune tale
That it were good to here the nyghtyngale
Rather than the lewde cuckowe synge

And than I thought anon as it was day
I wolde go somwhere to assay
If that I myght a nyghtyngale here
For yet had I none herde of al that yere
And it was tho the thirde nyght of May

And anon as I the day aspyde
No lenger wolde I in my bedde abyde
But vnto a wodde that was faste by
I went forthe a lone boldely
And helde the way downe by a litle lyde

Tyl I came to a launde of whyte & grene
So fayre one had I neuer in bone
The grounde was grene/ypoudred w[t] daysyes
The flowres and the grenes lyke fyre
Al grene and whyte/was nothyng els seue

Of the cuckowe and the nyghtyngale.

There sate I downe among the faire flowres
And sawe the birdes stryppe out of her bowres
There as they rested hem al the nyght
They were so ioyful of the dayes lyght
They began of thayr for to done houres

They coude that seruyce al by rote
There was many a louely note
Some songe loude as they had playned
And some in other maner voice pfayned
And some al out with the ful throte

They proyned hem/ & made hem right gay
And daunseden and lepten on the spray
And euermore two and two in fere
Right so as they had chosen hem to yere
In Feuerere vpon saynt Valentynes day

And the ryuer that I sate vpon
It made suche a noyse as it ron
Accordaunt with the vyrdes armony
Me thought it was the best melody
That myght ben yherde of any mon

And for delyte/ I wotte neuer how
I fel in suche a slomber and a swowe
Nat al a slepe/ ne fully waknyng
And in that swowe me thought I herde syng
The foure vyrde the leude Cuckowe

And that was on a tree right fast by
But who was thay yuel apayde but I
Nowe god (qd I) that dyed on the crops
Yeue sorowe on the/ and on thy leude boys
Ful spytel hope haue I nowe of thy cry

And as I with the cuckowe thus gan chyde
I herde in the neyte busshe besyde
A nyghtyngale so lustely syng
That with heuenly voice she made ryng
Through al the grene wode wyde

Ah/ good nyghtyngale (qd I thyn)
A lytel haste thou ben to longe hen
For here hath ben the leude cuckowe
And songen songes rather than hast thou
I praye to god yuel fyre her burn

But nowe I wel you tel a wonder thyng
As longe as I laye in that swowenyng
Me thought I wyst what the byrdes ment
And what they sayd/ & what was her entent
And of her speche I had good knowyng

There herde I the Nyghtyngale say
Nowe good Cuckowe go for where away
And lette be that cay syngen dwellen here
For euery wight eschewith the to here
Thy songes ben so clenge in good fay

What (qd he) what may the eyleu nowe
It thynketh me I synge as wel as thou
For my songe is bothe trewe and playne
And though I can not crakel so in Bayne
As thou doest in thy throte/ I wot neuer howe

And euery wight may vnderstande me
But nyghtyngale so may they not done the
For thou haste many a nyce queynt crye
I haue the herde sayne/ ocy ocy
Howe might I knowe what that shulde be

Ah foole (qd she) woste thou not what it is
Whan that I say/ ocy ocy pwis
Thay meane I that I wolde wonder fayne
That al they were shamfully yslayne
That meanen aught agayne lone amys

And also I wolde that al tho had the bede
That thynke not in loue her lyfe to lede
For who so that wol not the god of loue serue
I dare wel say he is worthy to sterue
And for that skyl/ ocy ocy I grede

Eye (qd the cuckowe) this is a queynt lawe
That euery wight shal loue or be to drawe
But I forsake al suche companye
For myne entent is not for to dye
Ne neuer while I lyue on loues poke to draw

For louers ben the folke that ben on lyue
That most disease haue/ and most vnthryue
And most endure sorowe/ wo/ and care
And lesse selen of welfare
What nedeth it ayenst trouth to stryue

What

What (qꝺ she) thou arte out of thy mynde
How myght there in thy thurfnesse synde
To speke of soure seruauntes in this wyse
For in this worlde is none so good seruyse
To euery wight that gentyll is of hynde

For therof truely cometh al goodnesse
Al honour/and al gentylnesse
Worshyp/ease/and al herten lust
Parfyte ioye/and ful assured trust
Iolyte/plesaunce/and fresshnesse

Lowlyhed/largesse/and curtesye
Semelyhed/and trewe companye
Dede of shame for to done anoye
For he that truely soules seruaunt is
Were lother be shamed than to dye

And that this is sothe that I sey
Ye that hyderto I wol saye and bey
And cuckowe so I rede that thou do ryght
Than (qꝺ she) set me neuer hame ryght
If euere I vnto that counsayle obey

Nyghtyngale thou spekest wonder fayre
But for al that is the sothe contrayre
For loue is in ponge folke but rage
And in elde folke a great dotage
Who muste it vseth muste shal repayre

For therof cometh disease and heynesse
So sone we gret/and many a grete sekenesse
Dispyte/debate/angre/and enuye
Despayre/shame/vntrust/and ielousye
Pride/mischefe/pouert/and woodnesse

Longyng is an offyce of dispayre
And out tryng is there that is not fayre
For who that getteth of loue a syght bryght
But if he be al wery of his wyte
He may ful sone of age hame hye hym

And nightyngale therfore forthe thy wye
For trewe me wel/for al thy queynt crye
If thou be seyne in boure for thy make
Thou shalt be an open that boy forsake
And thus thou shalt forey as do I

Fye (qꝺ she) on thy name and on the
The god of loue me let the neuer plese
For thou art worse a thousandfolde than wood
For many one is ful worthy and ful good
That god be maught me had loue yow

For euermore loue his seruauntes amendeth
And from al yuel tauches hem defendeth
And maketh hem to brenne right in a fyre
In trouthe and in worshypful desyre
And when hem lyketh/wo vnduge hem sedeth

Thou nyghtyngale he sayd/be styl
For loue hath no reason/but it is wyl
For ofte tyme vntrewe folke he easeth
And trewe folke so bytterly he displeaseth
That for despayre of corage he let hem synke

Than take I of the nyghtyngale kepe
How she cast a syghe out of her depe
And sayd/alas that euer I was bore
I can for teene not say one worde more
And right with ꝑ worde she braste out to wepe

Alas (quod she) my herte wol tobrste
To herken thus thus lewde bryde speke
Of loue/and of his worshypful seruyse
Now god of loue thou helpe me in some wyse
That I may on this cuckowe ben awreke

Me thought than he sterte vp anoy
And glad was I that he was agoy
And curssed the cuckowe as he flayn
Sayd farewel/farewel poppyngaye
To thought he had scorned me alone

And than came the nyghtyngale to me
And sayd/fayre fayre sothe I thanke the
That thou hast spoke me to reskewe
And one ensample to some make I nowe
That of this thay I wol the forgete be

I thanked her/and was right wel apayde
Ye (quod she) and be thou not dismayde
Tho thou hane herde ꝑ cuckowe mis than me
For if I spare it shal amended be
The nyght thay/if I be not affrayde

And one thyng I wol rede the asso
Ne loue thou not the cuckowe ne his lowrs so
For al that he hath sayd is stronge leasyng
Nay (qõ I) therto shal nothyng me bring
For loue and it hath do me moche wo

Yet/vse (quod she) this medicyne
Euery day this way or thou dyne
Go loke vpon the fresshe daysye
And though thou be for wo in poynt to dye
That shal ful greatly lessen the of thy pyne

And loke alway that thou be good and trewe
And I wol synge one of the songes newe
For loue of the/as loude as I may crye
And than she began this songe ful hye
I shrewe al hem that ven of loue untrewe

And whan she had songe it to the ende
Nowe farewel (qõ she) for I mote wende
And god of loue/that can right wel and may
As moche ioye sende the this day
As any yet louer he euer sende

Thus taketh the nightyngale her leeue of me
I pray to god alway with her be
And ioye of loue he sende her euermore
And shylde vs fro the cuckowe and his lore
For there is not so false a tyde as he

Forthe she flewe the gentyl nyghtyngale
To al the tydes that were in that dale
And gate hem al in to a place in fere
And besoughten hem that they wolde here
Her disease/and thus began her tale

The cuckowe/wel it is not for to hyde
Howe the cuckowe and I fast haue chyde
Euer sythen it was daye lyght
I praye you al/that ye do me ryght
Of that foule false vnkynde kynde

They spake o tyde for al by one assent
This mater asketh good auysement
For we bey tydes here in fere
And soth it is/the cuckowe is not here
And therfore we wol haue a parlyment

And therat shal the egle be our kynde
And other peres that ben of estrode
And the cuckowe shal be after sent
There shal be yeue the iugement
Or els we shal fynally make accorde

And this shal be without nay
The morowe after saynt Valentynes day
Vnder a maple that is fayre and grene
Before the chambre wyndowe of the quene
At wodestocke vpon the grene lay

She thanked hem/and than her leeue toke
And in to an hauthorne by that broke
And there she sate and songe vpon that tre
Terme of lyfe loue hath with holde me
So loude that I with that songe awoke.

¶ Explicit.

O lende booke with thy foule rudenesse
Syth thou haste neyther beaute ne eloquence
Who hath the caused or yeue the hardynesse
For to apere in my ladyes presence
I am ful fyker thou kno west her benivolence
Ful agreable to al her abeyeng
For of al good she is the best lyuyng

Alas that thou ne haddest worthynesse
To shewe to her some plesaunt sentence
Sythe that she hath through her gentylesse
Accepted the seruaunt to her digne reuerence
Of/me repenteth that I ne had scyence
And leyser als/to make the more flouryshyng
For of al good she is the best lyuyng

Beseche her meekely with al lowlynesse
Though I be ferre from her in absence
To thinke on my trouth to her stedfastnesse
And to abrege of my sorowes the processe
Which caused is/wherof she wel wets pol sappose
She syke amonge to notifye me her lyking
For of al good she is the best lyuyng.

¶ Lenuoye.

Auroye of gladnesse and day of lustynesse
Lyeryte a nyght with heuenly influence
Illumyned/rote of beaute and goodnesse

Susprred

Beseyrynge whiche I offende in seiynge
Of grace I beseche alle the yonge maistres
Nowe of al goodlyhed ye be best spuynge.

¶ Explicit.

¶ Prologe/ vnto the lordes and
gentylmen of the kyn-
ges house.

Wy noble sonnes and ese my lordes dere
I pour father called Vnworthely
Sende vnto you this lytel treatyse here
Written with myne owne vnsure handes ful rudely
Although it be that I not vnwrestedly
Haue written to your estates/ I you praye
Myne vncunnynge to beth benignesly
For goddes sake/ and herken what I saye

I complayne me sore whan I remembre me
The sodayne age that is vpon me fal
But more I complayne my misspent vnwetynde
The whiche is impossible ayen for to cal
Dout certainly the moste complaynte of al
Is to thynke that I haue be so myse
That I no vnde vertues to me cal
In al my youthe/ but vyces aye cherysse

Of whiche I asse many of the lorde
That arte almyghty god in maieste
Beseche you to make so euer accorde
Betwyxte the and my soule that vnryte
We thy sust me thynke pouerte
Haue no lordshyp ouer my spirite to fruite
Thou lorde of rest and perfyte vnyte
Put fro me vyce/ and kepe my soule fele

And yeue me myght my wyte I haue lyse a space
The to confyrme fully to thy pleasaunce
Shewe me to me thyne vnmesurable grace
And my good mother graunt me perseueraunce
Of al my youthe forget the ygnorance
Yeue me good wyl to serue the eye to quaunce
Al my lyfe after thyne ordynaunce
And shewe me to mercy of thyne holy

Wy lordes dere/ wote I this compendyous werke
To you whom I sone moste entirely
Is for to warne you as I can endyte
That tyme lasse in youthe folily
Growth a wight bodely and goostly
I meane hem that to lustes vyce entende
Wherfore lordes I pray you specially
Your youthe in vertue shapeth to dispende

Plante the rote of youthe in suche a wyse
That in vertue your growyng be alway
Lose alway goodnesse be in your eyeryse
That shal you mighty make at eche assay
The sende to withstande at eche affray
Passeth wysely this perylous pylgrymage
Thynke on this worde/ I werke it euery day
That shal you yeue a parfyte floured age

Taketh also hede how that these noble clerkes
Write in her bokes of great sapyence
Sayeng that sayth is herd without vertues werkes
And right so is estate with negligence
Of vertue/ and therfore with dyligence
Shapeth of vertue so to plante the rote
That ye therof haue ful experyence
To worshyp of your lyfe and soules bote

Taketh also hede that lordshyp ne estate
Without vertue may not longe endure
Thynketh eke how vyces & vertue at debate
Haue ben & shal while the worlde may dure
And euer the vyces by auenture
Be ouerthrowe/ and thynketh euermore
That god is lorde of al vertue/ and fygure
Of al goodnesse/ and therfore folowe his lore

Thy mayster Chaucer/ god his soule saue
That in his langage was so curyous
He sayd that the father whiche is herd a grete
Dyspreth nothyng his vertue with his house
Vnto his children/ and therfore beholdeth
Ought ye be/ beset vnclogged of grace
To yeue you myght for to be vertuous
Thoughe whyche ye must haue pyn of his place

Here may ye that vertuous noblesse
Lerneth rede to you by way of exemplare

D.d.d. iij. But

But it cometh by lefull besynesse
Of honest lyste/and not by slogardnie.
Wherfore in youthe I rede you ye ebesye
The house of Vertue in suche a manere
That in your age may you kepe and gye
Fro the tempest of woldes wawes here

Thynketh howe bet wyxe Vertue and estate
There is a parfyte blessed maryage
Vertue is cause of peace/wyer of debate
In mannes soule/the whiche be ful of corage
Cherissheth than Vertue/wyces to outrage
Diuerth hem away/let hem haue no wonyng
In your soules/leseth not the herytage
Whiche god hath yeue to Vertuous lyuyng

Taketh hede also howe men of poore degre
Through Vertue haue be set in great honour
And euer haue lyued in great prosperite
Through cherisshyng of Vertuous labour
Thynketh also howe many a gouernour
Called to estate hath be set ful lowe
Through misusyng of right and of errour
And therfore I counsaile you Vertue to knowe

Thus by your auctorites ye may nothig clayme
As ỳ my mayster Chaucer sayth eyther (me
But temporel thing/ỳ men may hurte or mayme
Than is god stocke of Vertuous nobleste
And sythe that he is lorde of blysse dwelle
And made vs al/and for vs al deyde
Folowe we hym in Vertue with ful besynesse
And of this thig herke howe my mayster seyde

The first stocke father of gentylnesse
What man that claymeth gentyl for to be
Muste folowe his trace/& al his wrytes dresse
Vertue to loke/and vyces for to flye
For vnto Vertue longeth dignyte
And not the vnto sasely dare I deme
Al weare he mytre/coronne/or dyademe

The first stocke was ful of right/rychesse
Trewe of his worde/sobre/pytous/and free
Clene of his goste/and lourd besynesse
Ayenst the vyce of slouthe in honeste
And but his heyre loue Vertue as dyd he
He is not gentyl thoughe he ryche seme
Al weare he mytre/coronne/or dyademe

Vyce may be an heyre to olde rychesse
But there may no man/al men may se
Bequeth his heyre his Vertuous noblesse
That is apropred vnto no degre
But to the first father in maieste
That maketh his heyres hem ỳ can hit crauue
Al weare he mytre/coronne/or dyademe

Lo here this noble poete of Brytayne
Howe lightly in Vertuous sentence
The losse of youthe of Vertue can complayne
And therfore I pray you with your diligence
For your profyte and goddes reuerence
Temprith fully Vertue in your myndes
That whan ye come to your auncres presence
Ye be not Vertuelesse than behynde

Many lordes haue a maner nowe a dayes
Though one shewe hem a Vertuous matere
Her seruent youthe is of so false alayes
That of that arte they haue no ioy to here
But as a shyp that is without a stere
Driueth vp and downe without gouernaile
Wenyng that tyme wolde last pere by pere
Right so fare they for very ignoraunce

For very shame knowe they nat by reason (ge
That after an ebbe ther cometh a flode ful ra
In ỳ same wise whā youth passeth his seasō
Cometh crokednesse and vnlusky palled age
And sone after cometh the Vanytes of corage
And if that her youth haue no Vertue purpled
Al men wel saye fye on her vasselage
Thus hath her slouth hir worshyp hir berybed.

Boecius the clerke/ as men may rede and se
Saith in his boke of Consolatiō
What may be fyrth of Tyme or tyre
Plentous fruite in reapping season
Muste euer eschewe to be oppressyon
Vnto the rote whyle it is yong and grene
Thus may ye se wel by that induction
That youth Vertuelesse bocheth mocke tene

Shal

Nature sendth them vpon the vnwise worlde
Vertue I meane with good vnderstandinge (sothe
Dyuerse of wyt of byrth and worldelynesse
Of slouthfulnesse/ enuye/ and wylfulnesse
Doth elle so the vertue confuse sothfastnesse
Doth elle so the vertue Prudence of Vlyxes
And what so euer vertue/ that of Salomon is
Of worldlynes forse or enuyous couetyse

Doth elle so of Tullius Hostylius
That fro pouert came to hyghe degre
Though vertue/ doubt elle of Tullius
The conquerour/ so we poore a man was he
Yet through his vertue and his gentylnesse
Of many a Countrey had he gouernaunce
Thus vertue bringeth a man to great degre
Is the wyght that lust to be hym entendaunce

Rede here ayenst me we of Nero Vertulers
Tullius Hoste also of proude Balthasare
They hadd vertue/ cowpte and pere
And lose how we Antyochus syr fro his chare
That he was slayn and bonen al to tare
Lose what vnthankes they had for her dyete
Who so trust not by these signes before
I dare wel say vnfortunate and vyte he

I say no more no wer say/ but herby may ye se
Howe vertue confuse perfyte sykernesse
And vyces cowpte al prosperyte
The best is eche man to chose as I gesse
Dothe as you lyst/ I me excuse expresse
I wolde be right sorie of that ye mysdeme
God graunte you my sentence rede fayre
So that through negligence ye not it lese.

¶ Explicit.

Sometyme I wonde so stedfast was & stable
That mannes wytte was ay abydynge
And no wyt it as so false and deceyuable
That that be and bene as in comparyson
Is nothyng lyke/ for turned is vp so doune
All the worlde thrugh vnthe and slydernesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

What maketh the worlde to be so variable
But lust that may nowe in hym endure
Nor amonge vs a man is hardy stable
But if he can by sowre calkulynge
Do his neyghbour wronge and oppressynge
What counseth this but wylful wantonnesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

Trouthe is put doune/ reason is holde fable
Vertue hath now no myght ne strengthe in man
Pyte is exyled/ no man is merciable
Through couetyse is blente discretion
The worlde hath made a permutation
Fro right to wronge/ fro trouth to fykelnesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

¶ Lenuoye.

Prince dispise to be dissimulable
Cherisshe thy folke/ and hate extorcyon
Suffre nothyng that may be reprouable
To thyne estate done in thy regyon
Shewe forthe the perle of cassydonie
Dede god do lawe/ thine trouth & worthynes
And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

¶ Explicit.

¶ Good counsayle of Chaucer.

Fyne ye fro couetyse & drawe yow into stedfastnesse
Kepe no vice vnto the good if it be shame
For gode hath hate/ and chydynge fykelnesse
Pease hath enuye/ and welle is blent ouer al
Hauoure no more than the behoue shal
Rede wel thy selfe that other folke shal rede
And trouthe the shal delyuer it is no drede.

Paynt the not with crosed to rede
In trouthe of her that turneth as a balle
Great rest stondeth in lytel besynesse
Bewar also to spurne agayne a nayle
Strywe not as dothe a crocke with a walle
Demme thy selfe that demest others dede
And trouthe the shal delyuer it is no drede

Envoye

That thy is sent receyue in buxomnesse
The wrastlyng of this worlde asketh a fal
Here is no home/ here is but wyldernesse
Forthe pylgryme/ forthe out of thy stal
Loke vp on hyghe and thanke god of al

Explicit

Weyue thy lustis and lette thy goost the lede
And trouthe the shal delyuer it is no drede.
¶ Explicit.

¶ Balade of the Pylgage without paynyng.

Playntyse to Fortune.

This wrecched worldes transmutacion
As wele and wo/ now we poure & now honour
Without order or due discrecion
Gouerned is by fortunes errour
But nathelesse the lacke of her fauour
Ne may not do me synge though that I dye
Jay tout pardu mon temps et labour
For synally fortune I defye

Yet is me lefte the spyght of my reason
To knowe frende fro foe in thy mirrour
So mocche hath yet thy tournyng vp & down
Taught me to knowen in eche hour
But truely no force of thy reddour
To him that ouer him selfe hath maistry
My suffysaunce shalbe my socour
For finally fortune I defye.

O Socrates thou stedfast champion
She myght neuer be thy turmentour
Thou neuer dreddest her oppressyon
Ne in her chere founde thou no fauour
Thou knewe the discrete of her colour
And that her most worshyp is for to fye
I knowe her eke a false dissymulour
For finally fortune I defye

The answer of fortune.

No man is wretched but him selfe it wene
He that hath him selfe hath sufficyaunce
Why sayst thou than I am to the so kene
That hast thy selfe out of my gouernaunce
Dey thus/ graunmercy of thyne habundaunce
That thou hast lent or this/ þ shalt not sleyne
What wost thou yet how I the wol anaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a tyme

I haue the taught dampnyng by humble
Frendes of estate/ and frendes of countenaunce
The nedeth not the gyfte of an hyne
That cureth euery dethe for her penaunce
Now wost thou eke that loue is ignoraunce
yet shalt thyne enduer/ a yer thou meyst aryne
There kouerte breuth the key of my sufferaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a tyme

How many haue I refused to sustene
Sethe I haue the fostred in thy pleasaunce
Wolte thou than make a statute on thy quene
That I shalde aye at thyne ordynaunce
Thou bowe atte my byddyng of displeasaunce
About the wheele with other must thou dryue
Wy lore is bette/ than welthe in ignoraunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a tyme

The answere to fortune.

Thy lore I dampne/ it is all vnresyte
Wy frende mayst þ not trust vnder goddesse
That I thy frendes know I thanke it the
Take hem ageyne/ lette hem go fro e presse
The nygardes my stepping her recheesse
Prodygalyte is thou wolte her toure assayle
Wicke appetyte cometh aye before sickenesse
In general this rule may not fayle

¶ Fortune.

Thou pynchest at my mutabylyte
For I the sent a droppe of my richesse
And nowe me lyketh to withdrawe me
Why shuldest thou my royalte oppresse
The see may ebbe and flowe more and lesse
The welken hath myne to shyne/ rayn/ & hayle
Right so must I vnder my lordshyppe bowe
In general this rule may not fayle

The playntyfe.

Lo/ the experyence of the mayster
That al purposeth of his rygh wysenesse
That same thynge fortune chaungeth ye
ye vnder heresye ful of sadnesse
The seuen sith properte of sykernesse
This worlde hath euer resteles trauayle
The laste day is ende of myne heuynesse
In general this rule may not fayle

The enuoye of fortune.

Princes I pray you of your gentylnesse
Lette not this mater make you rebelle
And I shal quyte you this besynesse
And if ye lyst retorne hem ageyne
Pray ye the best frende of the mekenesse
That to some better estate he may vs brynge

¶ Explicit. Lenuoye

TO Englisch folk the flatterie of Lydgate
That euer more enforceth to endure
Sithe that he is the lowest goddes seruy
We we wepe and wayle / and pas[s]ion endure
As may in erthe a mortal creature
Alas / for rewthe[?] may thys thyng preuayle
Of whyche errour I dye almost for dede

By worde eterne whylom was it shape
That for the fyrst erreth in no maner
Le myght of feeres be lenger escape
But now we so wepely dymme my fyr sphere
That with her teares she wol quenche her fere
Alas Lydgate this is for thyne offence
Thou causest this deluge of pestilence

Hast thou not sayd in blasphemie of ꝑ goddes
Through pride / or through thy grete rechelesse
Such thyngs as in the lawe of loue forbode is
That for thy lady sawe not thy distresse
Therfore thou yaue her vp at thy greatest
Alas Lydgate of olde sayde ne songe
Was neuer erst Lydgate blamed for his tong

Thou darkest in frome Cupyde ese to receyue
Of thilke rebel worde ꝑ thou hast spoken
For whyche he wol no lenger be thy laide
And Lydgate / though thou to hym be not broken
He wol not smyte thy arowes bene y wroken
Dy the ne me / ne none of our spyere
We shal of thy harme neuer hurte ne care

Nowe certes frende I drede of thyne vnhappe
Lest for thy gylte the wreche of loue pourde
Dy al thou shal bey soure sorowes of happe
That bene so fyersly fallen to sporde
Then we shal for our sadnes sone ouer more
But wel I wote thou wolt amende a lyp
Lo olde gryselt fyssh to renne and playe

Nay Lydgate say not so / for I am aferde
God helpe me so / in no tyme hereafter
Lest yonge I amonge of slepe vnder my mantle
That ruffeth in my slomb[e]r[e] fyrst my pere
Whyle I tome pouge I put her forth in payne
Wist al that pestie that many people is tyrant
Dede many many thousand as for the tyme

Lydgate thou hatest at the firste sight
Of grete[?] al sorowe / and of wretchednesse
In thende of whyche I am but an heed
Forgotten in folytary wylderneesse
Yet Lydgate thynke on Tullius Fyndamesse
Whyne thy frende there it may fructify
Farewel / and lose thou neuer este sone besy.

¶ Epylogi.

O Ye of the lyng[?] rule the by sapience
Disshoppe be able to mynyster doctrine
Aforde to shewe counsayle yeue audience
Vomanished to chastyte euer enclyne
Kuyght sette thy bedes worship determyne
Be rightfoule inge in sauyng thy name
Rich do almesse / lest thou lese thyne w[ith] shame

People obey your kyng and the lawe
Age be thou ruled by goodly religion
Trewe seruāt bashefull / & hope ꝑ vnder awe
And thou poore spe on presumption
Inobedience to youth is bitter distruction
Remembre you how we god hath set you so
And do your parte as ye be ordayned to.

Chaucer vnto his empty purse.

To you my purse and to non other wight
Complayne I / for ye be my lady dere
I am sorye now that ye be lyght
For certes ye now make me heuy chere
Me were as lefe be layde vpon a bere
For whyche vnto your mercy thus I crye
Be hevy agayne or els mote I dye

Now vouchsafe this day or it be nyght
That I of you the blysful sowne may here
Or se your colour lyke the sonne bryght
That of yelownesse had neuer pere
Ye be my lyfe / ye be my hertes stere
Quene of comforte and of good company
Be hevy agayne / or els mote I dye

Now purse that art to me my lyues lyght
And saueour / as do wys thy best dere
Out of this towne helpe me by your myght
Syth that ye wol not be my tresorere
For I am shave as nyghe as any frere
But I pray vnto your curtesye
Be hevy agayne / or els mote I dye.

¶ Explicit.

Chaucer vnto his Scrypge.

O conquerour of Brutes Albyon
Whiche that by lyne and fere electyon
Bere bere lyng/ this to you I sende
And pe that may al harmes amende
Haue myndc vpon my supplycation.

Explicit.

A Dulyder wel euery circumstaunce
Of what estate soeuer thou be
Riche/ stronge/ or mighty of puissaunce
Prudent or wyse; discrete or besy
The dome of folke in sothe thou may nat flye
What euer thou daste trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

For in thy porte or in thyne apparayle
If thou be cladde and honestly be sayne
Among the people of malyce wol nat fayle
Without aduyce or treason for to sayne
That thyn array is mode & wrought I sayne
What suffre hem spek/ and trust wel this
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

Thou wolde to kynges be equiualent
With great lordes curyn and perygal
And if thou be lowne and al to rent
Than wol they say/ and iangle oueral
That thou arte a slogarde þ neuer thinx shal
pet suffre hem spek/ and trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

If it befal that thou take a wyfe
They wol falsly say in their entent
That thou arte lykely euer to lyue in stryfe
Voyde of al rest/ without alegement
Vpon hem mayster/ this is their iugement
Yet suffren their speche/ and truste wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say a myssc

If thou be fayre and excellent of beaute
Yet wol they say that thou arte amerous
If thou be foule and lyke vn to se
They wol assume that thou arte vycious
The peoples langage is so dispytous
Suffer al their speche/ and truste wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

If so be that thou of parfytenesse
Haue and loue to lyue in chastyte
Than wol folke of thy person expresse
That thou art impotent impudent in thy degre
And thus wheither thou be chaste or lecherous
Suffre hem speke/ and trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be fatte or corpulent
Than wol they say thou arte a glotton
A deuourer/ or els Ydulent
If thou be megre or leane of fleshyon
Cal the a nygarde in their opynyon
pet suffre them speke/ and trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be ryche/ some wol yeue the laude
And say it cometh of prudent gouernaunce
And some wol say it cometh of fraude
Or by stregth/ or by falsc chaffaunce
To say the worste/ falle hem so grct pleasaunce
What suffre hem say/ and trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be sadde or sobre of countenaunce
Than wol say thou thynkest some treason
And if thou be glad of daliaunce
Than wol deme it dissolucion
Lasshyng sayre speche abusarion
pet let hem spek/ and trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway say amys

And who that is holy & perfecting
Than of malyce wol sai hym an hypocryte
And who that is merry of thinx entertaining
Than say in ryot he lyueth hem lyke
Some mourne in black/ some laugh I dare wel
What suffre hem say/ and trust wel this
A wicked tong wol alway say amys

Who speketh mesle is holden prudent
And who dilateth/ many say that he is fonde
And who that sayth spek wele great sentence
Some wole yet wol wyte how of fole
Trouth is put to rep/ and wrong gete glorye
And who þ lyst prudently lyuen & resyst of vice
It is a wicked tonge þ alway purpose to say amys

Fin

For thogh a man have as parfyt
Alle wit as Dauyd thorw out fumpfite
Or ware as Salomon in wyfdom as prudent
Or ly thogh he egal with Jofue
Or ftrong as Sampfon/or Judas Machabe
Yet fere al that/truft right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway fay outrye

And thogh a man had the hygh prowefle
Of worthy Hector/Troyes champyon
The fone of Troylus/or the Pyndarifle
Or of Cefar the famous hygh renoun
With al Alyfaunders domynacion
Yet for al that truft right wel this
Some wicked tonge wol fay of him outrye

Or thogh a man of hygh or lowe degre
Of Tullius had the fugred eloquence
Or of Seneca the great moralyte
Or of Caton the forefyght and prouydence
The cõquefl of Charles Artures magnificence
Yet for al that/truft right wel this
Some wicked tonge wol fay of him outrye

The wyfely trouth of Penelope
Thogh they it had in her poffeffyon
Holynelle/ beautie/ the Pyndarifle of Medee
The lyfe infayned of Martia Caton
Or of Alceft the trewe affection
Yet dare I fay/and truft right wel this
A wicked tonge wol fay of her outrye

Thay fyghen if is fo/no man may efchewe
The ftroke of tonge/but it perus and byte
Ful harde it is a man for to rescewe
Out of cleer daunger him for to acquyte
Wo to the tonges that him fo belyte
To fclaunder or fclander/I fet their ftudy in this
And their plefaunces to do and fay outrye

Moft noble princes/chery ffers of Vertue
Remembreth you of hygh difcretyon
The firft Vertue and moft plefyng to Jefu
(By the auctoryte and fentence of Caton)
Is a good tonge in fee opinyon
Chaufe the trouthe/and of no fcleaunder be this
Wherfore we pray fey of it fay outrye.

¶ Et fic eft finis.

¶ Thus endeth the workes of Geffray Chaucer. Prynted at London by Thomas Godfray. The yere of our lorde. M. D. xxxii.

¶ Cum priuilegio Regie maieftatis.

¶ Epitaphium Galfridi Chaucer/per poetam laureatum Stephanum Surigonium Mediolanenfem in decretis licentiatum.

Pierides muſe ſi poſſunt munera fletus
Fundere/diuinas atq; rigare genas/
Galfridi vatis Chaucer crudelia fata
Plãgite:ſit lachrymis abſtinuiſſe nephas.
Vos coluit Vines: at Vos celebrate ſepultum
Reddatur merito gratia digna viro.
Grãde decus Vobis eſt docti muſa Maronis/
Qua didicit melius fingua latina loqui.
Grãde/noui q; dec? Chaucer/famãq; parit
Hen ẽtum fuerat priſca Britannia rudis
Reddidit in ſigné maternis verſibus/vt iam
Aurea ſplendeſcat/ferrea facta prius.
Hunc ſatuiſſe viri nil/ſi tot opuſcula ſcripſit
Diverſis/egregius que decorata modis/
Socratis ingenium/vel fontes philoſophie/
Quicquid et arcani dogmata ſacra ferūt.
Et quaſcũq; velis/tenuit dignaſſimus artes
Hic vates/parvo conditus hoc tumulo.
Ah laudes ẽtum preclara Britannia perdis/
Dum rapuit tantum mors odioſa virum/
Crudelem parce/crudelia fila ſorores.
Non tamen extincta corpore/fama perit.
Vivet in eternum/vivent dum ſcripta poete:
Vivant eterno tot monumenta die.
Si qua bonos tãgit pietas/ſi carmine dign?
Carmina qui cernit tot cumulata modis/
Hec ſibi marmoreo ſcribatur verba ſepulchro
Hec maneat laudis ſarcina ſumma tue.
Galfridus Chaucer vates/et fama poeſis
Materna/hac ſacra ſum tumulat? humo.

Poſt obitum Cayton voluit te vivere cura
Wallichi/Chaucer clare poeta tui/
Nam tua non ſolū cõpreſſit opuſcula ſomnus
Hec quoq; ſed laudes noſſe ſuperſtes fuas.